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Near East & South Asia

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IRAQ

Sanctions Said Behind Ceaseless Rise in Prices

94LH0089A *Baghdad ALIF BA'* in Arabic
6 Jul 94 pp 16-17

[Article by Rafal Isma'il: "Market Parasites in Supply-and-Demand Game; 'Lions' Roam Markets To Rob Citizens; Pharmacies Sell Drug Quota Before They Receive It"]

[Text] Prices are rising constantly and citizens with a limited income in particular suffer from this ceaseless rise that pressures them and intensifies their hardship, which is caused by continuation of the unjust blockade.

Choose any commodity produced by the socialist sector or joint sector and compare its official sale price with the price announced to you. You will find that the difference in prices is twofold, threefold, or fourfold, beginning with the pack of cigarettes, construction materials, and clothes that one wears and not ending with one's car tire, Diwaniyah brand, and one's car battery, Babil brand.

Where and how is the commodity price loaded with these additions? Who is responsible, and what is the way for the citizen to acquire a domestic commodity at a reasonable price under these circumstances?

Come let us seek an answer, rather answers, to this question.

The price of a pack of regular pack of Sumar cigarettes is 6 dinars [ID] but it is sold in the black market for ID125. The parties to the problem are the producing plant, an endless chain of middlemen, and the consumer who shoulders the weight of these middlemen and strains under it.

When the General Tobacco Establishment is asked about how it markets its products, it says that distribution channels are limited! Here, our amazement is heightened and we ask an additional question: but the market abounds with these cigarettes. Where do all these black market middlemen get them?

The answer is provided by Samir Ni'mah, a shopowner, who has said: "We get these quantities of cigarettes that you see in front of you from the establishment itself through direct purchases or through hidden agreements between us and the establishment to collect bigger quotas for higher prices."

So, this is one way. Another way is pointed out by another shopowner who himself is an agent with whom the establishment deals and who has said, "They sell to us at a higher price than their purchase price or the price offered by middlemen and women. We don't know how they acquire such quantities."

We asked this shopowner about the prices at which cigarettes are sold to consumers after sellers acquire them in one of the above ways!

He said, "The official price of a gross of Sumar cigarettes is ID65, whereas we get the gross for ID1,430. We, in turn, sell it for ID1,500. By a simple calculation, we find that nearly ID1,135 go to middlemen during the cycles through which the commodity goes on its way from the establishment to the consumer.

Now, look at your clothes and read the official prices that are affixed to them at times, and you will find that they are do no better than cigarettes. Address your question to the producing plants, which are socialist, joint, and private sector plants, and you will find that a long column of middlemen open their mouths every morning to devour more new commission fees that you, as a consumer, have to pay through the constant and unpalatable increase in prices.

We wonder: Is it difficult to create distribution channels that eliminate these parasitic cycles?

Try to buy a milk bottle, a tin of butter, or a small piece of cheese, and you will find that their prices by the time you get them are much higher than the sale price set for them by the producing plant. Are we not entitled to ask here: Where do these sellers get these large quantities at a time when the Public Dairy Products Establishment asserts that there is no pilfering and that the situation is stable?

Try to buy a cement bag to repair any structural damage in your house and compare the official price with the purchase price you pay for cement. Repeat the process with baked bricks, glass, and other materials.

Pause before foodstuffs, manufactured goods, glassware, electrical products, and numerous other goods, and you will find that the same phenomenon repeats itself and that the citizen pays high prices to unemployed people who live a happy and easy life at the expense of his life.

The market has turned into a big monster and the enormous mouth of this monster is lined by groups of people who are unemployed, not because they cannot get work, but because they want to get rich quickly without any evident effort and without adding anything to the country's production process.

These people ordinarily march on the market from culturally and socially diverse sectors, and they include the failed politician; the fake intellectual; the night owl; the porter who has discovered the secrets of the trade through his profession; the civil servant, who has resigned from his job or has retired and has proceeded to market his relations and connections; the illiterate whose sole asset is a group of relatives who can facilitate his transactions; and numerous others.

All these make a profession of the middlemanship game, each in his own way, without employing any capital and without being taxed at all.

We will cite this case as an example to make the situation clear: The day is last Friday, and the place is Baghdad

al-Jadidah [New Baghdad]. A woman arrives from al-Fudayliyah carrying in her basket 20 kg of white cheese (bedouin cheese), and only God knows how and under what conditions the cheese was made. A middlewoman standing at the market entrance rushes toward the prey, gets hold of the basket, and prevents anybody else from approaching it. This middlewoman starts selling the cheese at ID250 per kg, even though she purchased it from the prey at a price of just ID100 per kg. It takes this woman two hours to sell the cheese, after which period she collects ID3,000 and pays the cheese owner ID2,000!

We said: "Umm Mahdi (the cheese owner or the prey, as we call her), why didn't you sell the cheese yourself and get ID5,000 instead of just ID2,000?" She answered with utter naivete: "I cannot manage it!"

Thus, the middlewoman, our very smart friend, collected ID3,000 in two hours without investing a single penny.

This is one case. For the second case, we will recount another tale: The place is al-Shurjah. A man enters shops and leaves in moments. We inquire and we find out that he offers his goods for sale. We pursue him and assure him that we will not feature him in our press report so he would show some of his papers.

He said: "I have 40 cartons of Aspen cigarettes."

"Contraband?" We interrupt with surprise.

He smiles in our face and says: "What contraband? The entire world smokes foreign. Can't you see it filling the market?"

"Where did you get 40 cartons of Aspen?"

"They don't belong to me. Somebody hid them with me when they were prohibited and he is offering them for sale now. But he is afraid to offer them personally so he uses me to market them for him at a good price."

"What will your share of the operation be?"

"No less than ID10,000."

"What is your original profession?"

"I worked as a butcher. I wish I had started my life in business. Its profits are great and the effort it requires is small, and it highlights one's real talents."

So, we are faced with professional parasites who do not belong under our extraordinary circumstances at a time when the people are straining under the hardship of an offensive blockade whose goal is to destroy not just the body but also the mind, the conscience, and the culture. These parasites cause the prices of locally produced goods to increase several times and, consequently, cause the prices of foreign goods to rise automatically.

These parasites are not reluctant to commit the most heinous crimes to achieve their end: damaged goods, adulteration, fraud, and forgery. They always reiterate

their customary phrase: "What sin have I committed. I take my share and walk away."

In previous interviews with the parties concerned, i.e., the Ministry of Trade, the Economic Crime Control Authority, and the Baghdad Chamber of Commerce, we pondered the law on scarcity as a justification for this condition. The gist of this law is that low production causes, in one way or another, demand to remain unfulfilled, thus leading to higher prices. Scarcity also leads to the emergence of parasitic channels through which goods are delivered to the consumer. Matters have reached the point where a pharmacy sells its quota of drugs even before it receives it. We can imagine for what price the purchasing pharmacy will sell the drugs!

But let us pause a little before some indicators:

Why are locally produced goods allowed to be sold at prices above the official price without any checks or controls, beginning with cigarettes and dairy products and not even ending with clothes? At the control level, why are these goods treated in our markets as if they were foreign goods whose prices the merchant is entitled to control as he wishes?

Is it impossible for the cabinet ministries and departments concerned, each according to its connection with the issue, to control the distribution channels so as to reduce the number of middle links?

Moreover, is it not noticed that very weak control in this area leads to increasing prices of the private sector's local products and that, consequently, conditions of competition work in favor of this sector, whereas stable prices for the socialist and joint sectors' products lead to reducing prices of private sector products automatically?

We ask this question especially since the state has provided and continues to provide numerous work opportunities in honorable fields through which the citizen can contribute truly to the process of highlighting real citizenship and to confronting the difficult current circumstances created by the tyrannical blockade? Why do we permit all this vast number of undisciplined people, who are not restricted by any requirements, to engage in trade with a dead conscience and with a heart that does not miss a beat while seeing the sword of greed falling on the consumer's neck?

Moreover, is there not a way to channel our country's capital toward real productive fields?

It is the custom of the newly rich (many of the merchants of this difficult time) not to part with their money. If they invest this money in a deal, they wait with hearts afire for the money to return quickly to them. This is why commerce, with its big and quick profits, has attracted these people. Why do we not pause before this phenomenon and debate how capital can be employed in productive fields that are beneficial in the long run?

Are the facilities offered by the authorities not concerned with importing materials involved in local industries intended to reduce the importing of ready-made goods; to increase local production and enhance its quality; to employ more workers; and to ensure continuity of the production which is fluctuating constantly because of the shortage of raw materials?

The citizen is entitled to purchase domestic products from the socialist, joint, and private sectors at the reasonable prices set by the producing parties, without the commodity going through long channels [before it is delivered to him]?

The indubitable fact is that cooperation between the consumer and the control agencies is the way to defeat the greedy and end the parasitic.

Country's Victory at Arab Minister's Meeting Lauded

94LH0087A Baghdad AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic
16 Jul 94 p 1, 2

[Article by Salah al-Mukhtar]

[Text] Who would have imagined, two years ago, that the Arab state of affairs would be such that we would witness the Arab ministers of culture taking a stand, demanding the lifting of the cultural and scientific embargo against Iraq? Two years ago, even a year ago, whenever they met, the Arab ministers of culture would ignore the embargo that has been imposed on Iraq and its people. Whenever one of the delegations would insist on discussing the cultural-scientific embargo that has been imposed on Iraq, some of the Arab ministers would close their ears, or would object, stating that this was a political question and that they were not authorized to discuss it!

However, clearly, this state of affairs has changed. At the meeting of ALECSO [Arab League Education, Culture, and Science Organization], which is the Arab organization for education, culture, and the sciences, the Arab ministers of culture that attended the meeting took a clear and strong stand. Their strong stand led to the inability of the representatives of Saudi Arabia and Kuwait at the meeting to object to the new position, which was based on making attempts to enable Iraq to import what it needs of books, periodicals, printing equipment and materials, photography equipment, and everything that cultural life in Iraq requires. The outcome was Saudi-Kuwaiti silence when the ministers called for making attempts to release the frozen Iraqi funds to make it possible to pay for educational, cultural, and scientific activities. The ministers even silenced the Kuwaiti minister when he attempted to discuss the subject of "Kuwaiti prisoners." They rejected that, thereby slapping him in the face!

Why were Saudi Arabia and Kuwait unable, this time around, to exert their influence and push in the direction of rejecting the Iraqi working paper which the ministry of education and information had presented and which

was accepted by the ministers? What is the importance of this development? For the first time, the ministers have adopted these resolutions as an expression of the general recognition, becoming more prevalent by the day, of the truth that the embargo that has been imposed on Iraq has lost all its justifications. It has become a hostile act aimed at destroying the components of natural life of the Iraqi people. It involves racial and political motives that have their basis in enmity to everything that is Arab and Islamic.

The Arab ministers of culture, together with their governments who instruct them, see great countries changing their positions on the embargo. They also see 10s of countries and large companies, including American companies, competing to obtain commercial deals from Iraq. Consequently, they have realized the long-term significance of these developments and have adopted a position that is in harmony with the exigencies of reality at the recent ALECSO meeting.

The observer has to determine the significance of this change: In this, their positive resolution, the ministers of culture have created a precedence. They have set the stage for similar resolutions that will be adopted by other ministers when they meet within the framework of the activities of the Arab League and its various organizations. Today, the Arab ministers of culture have taken a stand in support of Iraq. Tomorrow, the ministers of health, social affairs, and transportation, etc., will take the same stand as their colleagues, the ministers of culture.

The doors have been opened before Iraq, thanks to the steadfastness of the people of Iraq, their sacrifices, and the ingenuity of its leadership and the soundness of its comprehensive approach. ALECSO, as one of the Arab League organizations that deals with cultural, educational, and scientific matters, has cleared the way for other organizations, who will in their turn, in the end, influence the general direction of the Arab League. It is a positive and important step on the road to ending the embargo. It requires greater efforts in order to take other, more important steps.

Minister Said Meeting With Canadian Trade Delegation

94LH0093A Baghdad AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic
4 Jul 94 pp 1, 2

[Text] Ottawa—Radio Canada International has devoted special attention to the visit of a Canadian trade delegation to Iraq and to future trade relations between the two countries when the blockade against Iraq is lifted. A Radio Canada International correspondent has said that a group of Canadian businessmen have arrived in Baghdad to make contacts for the purpose of modifying trade exchange with Iraq as soon as the international blockade imposed on it is lifted. The correspondent added that the Federation of Iraqi Chambers of Commerce issued the invitation and that the delegation

was formed under the chairmanship of the Canadian Trade Corporation president who has stated that the Canadian delegation wishes to establish multi-faceted and strong bilateral economic relations that serve the interest of both countries.

In a related development, Trade Minister Dr. Muhammad Mahdi Salih has met with the Canadian businessmen's delegation, headed by Albert Shamoun, head of I.C. International [name and company as transliterated], a Canadian trade corporation. At the meeting, the minister reviewed the tyrannical economic blockade that is imposed on the Iraqi people and saying that it is in conflict with all international laws and traditions. The minister also reviewed the hardship Iraq is experiencing as a result of the shortage of food and medicine. He further reviewed the devastation inflicted by the aggressors on food stores and silos and the efforts made by the Ministry of Trade workers to restore all destroyed projects. 'Adnan al-Qudsi, chairman of the Iraqi Industries Federation, met yesterday with a delegation of Canadian businessmen and companies visiting the country currently under the leadership of Ian Macdonald [name as transliterated]. This meeting, attended by the federation secretary general and a number of federation members, discussed the possibility of cooperation between the Iraqi private sector industrialists and Canadian businessmen in a manner that contributes to bolstering and developing cooperation between them in industrial fields.

Al-Najaf Said Facing Difficulties Despite Efforts

94LH0090A *Baghdad ALIF BA' in Arabic*
6 Jul 94 pp 18-19

[Article by Muhsin Jawad: "Al-Najaf Problems Await Solution; Implementation Is Incompatible With Required Attention"]

[Text] Al-Najaf—From time to time, we receive complaints from the city of al-Najaf about water supply, municipal services, telephones, and other services. This has surprised us. His Excellency President Leader Saddam Husayn, may God keep and protect him, has devoted special attention to al-Najaf in particular, and vast sums have been allocated to implement service projects compatible with the importance of this holy city. So, what has happened and in what condition are the other services there at present?

Our correspondent in al-Najaf has interviewed a number of officials.

'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Ma'muri, al-Najaf deputy governor, has said:

"Services aren't just water, healthcare, and telephones. Services mean that we do the citizen justice in all aspects. This is what we learned from his excellency the leader president during the latest field visit he made to investigate the facts and to familiarize himself with the citizens' conditions. As a result, we moved to implement

his excellency's instructions to resist the economic blockade from within and to strike the efforts of greedy people by increasing the supply of locally-produced goods; by forming committees from the administration, the party, and the economic control agencies to watch market conditions and to expose monopolists and manipulators; and by keeping a constant on-the-spot watch on shopowners and referring violators to the authorities concerned so they will take legal steps against them. This measure has stabilized the market, especially since the fine has been increased to 10,000 dinars, plus the penalties of shutting the shop and of imprisonment if it becomes evident that the culprit is harming the people's livelihood.

"On the service side, working teams have begun to pave the streets of some quarters with flagstones. Another team has been formed to fill swamps inside the city and to transport refuse to sanitary garbage dumps. This is in addition to a team to maintain roads, parks, and road isles."

Regarding the scarcity of water, al-Najaf deputy governor said the reason is due fundamentally to the old age of the pumping station and of the drinking water pipeline network; to city expansion; and to the increase in the number of city suburbs, all of which has made it necessary to employ the alternate system of water delivery to the citizens.

Because the problem of water scarcity is truly one of the major problems reflected clearly in numerous complaints received by this magazine, we have interviewed the engineer managing the governorate's water and sewerage systems to ask him about the cause of this scarcity and about the steps taken to overcome it. It has become clear to us that al-Najaf in its entirety is supplied by the central project that started pumping water in 1970 and which has a designed capacity of 15 million gallons daily.

The director of water and sewerage systems noted that this capacity was enough at the time because there were no more than 12 residential quarters then, whereas the number of al-Najaf quarters has now risen to 44. Some of these quarters are as big as three of the old quarters. In a related area, citizens' increased water consumption has led to scarcity in the summer season. This is the result of frequent use of water for cooling, for watering gardens, and for other purposes that affect the availability of usable water. To deal with this condition, the directorate has installed 14 water complexes, each with a capacity of one-quarter million gallons daily, to supply some of the al-Najaf quarters with water. We should keep in mind that the capacity required for the city of al-Najaf is 40 million gallons, of which 25 million gallons are for the al-Najaf center alone. The source from which these complexes are supplied is the crude water project which had been designed originally to supply water for citizens' gardens. This project has been modified and put into operation 24 hours a day in order to supply the said complexes. Despite this, scarcity persists because of the

quick expansion of quarters. This is in addition to the numerous religious anniversaries and visitors. The number of visitors to the city amounts to more than one-half million visitors who stay for two or more days, thus leading to increased water consumption that is added to the original needs of the city's population.

Immediate Solutions

[Jawad] What are your immediate or future solutions to this problem?

[Director] We conduct constant maintenance campaigns in order to operate the projects at full capacity. Moreover, we employ the system of alternating quarters in order to supply water to the citizens. We also use tanker trucks to supply citizens with water daily. Moreover, our directorate detachments watch those who commit violations against the main and subsidiary pipelines and take steps against them.

[Jawad] We have noticed from our tours that al-Thawrah, al-Shurtah, [names as transliterated] al-Judaydat, al-Ansar, Saddam, and the Military Quarters are the quarters that suffer most from water scarcity, and even from the unavailability of water in some quarters.

[Director] These quarters are divided into two sections: a part located south of the city and another part north of the city. Regarding the northern quarters, water delivery capacity has been increased by installing a pump with a capacity of 1,000 cubic meters per hour and by extending a pipeline with a capacity of 500 mm to reach the Military Quarter. Six complexes, each with a capacity of one-quarter million gallons and supplied by the said pipeline, have also been moved to the area. It is hoped that work will be completed in the next few days. These areas will experience great improvement in the volume of usable water delivered. As for the southern quarters, they suffer because of the old age of the network that was built more than 40 years ago. Blockages and ruptures are frequent in these quarters.

As a result of the current circumstances that our country is experiencing, this network cannot be replaced, considering that it is more than 90 km long. Moreover, these quarters are at different elevations and located at the end of the networks. As a temporary remedy, we have been compelled to employ the system of alternating quarters. We also deal with the areas that suffer from severe scarcity by using tanker trucks that go to these areas daily. As for the health services and sanitary control, we leave it up to the reader to evaluate them on the bases of the photographs [not reproduced] that are published with this article and which tell a lot about municipal services in al-Najaf.

ISRAEL

'Marshall Plan' for Gaza Strip Proposed

94AA0105D Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 5 Aug 94
p B1

[Article by N. Strassler: "A Marshall Plan for Gaza"]

[Text] On 18 July 1991, Mikhail Gorbachev made his way home from London. He was tired and disappointed. The meeting with the leaders of the "big seven" was exhausting. Gorbachev understood that he was about to lose power. He arrived in London to ask for urgent assistance, since the Soviet economy had not been functioning for two years and inflation zoomed sky high; the national product was on a declining trend, unemployment on the rise, the stores empty, and long lines stretched everywhere.

Gorbachev asked for immediate aid to succeed in the difficult task of transferring 280 million people from a backward, centralist economy to a market economy. But the leaders of the United States, Canada, Britain, and Japan did not want to reach into their pockets. They, indeed, spoke very highly in his favor; they loved him and embraced him before the cameras. But money? No.

And, indeed, a month later, on 19 August 1991, the die was cast. The revolt against Gorbachev was on its way, because no world leader could rule over a hungry nation for long. Indeed, the revolt failed but, within a few months, on 25 December 1991, Gorbachev was forced to concede control to Boris Yeltsin. The Soviet era had ended. The Soviet Union fell apart.

Yeltsin's situation today is not one of the best, either. The hyperinflation continues to strike the Russian public, the national product is on a decline, and most of the population lives in poverty. Experts say that there is a good chance for Yeltsin's downfall and the rise of nationalist-conservatives to power. But, the West does not want to help, even though the continuation of Yeltsin's economic and democratic reforms is in the clear interest of Western countries.

When I asked Avraham Shohet this week whether there is an Israeli interest in giving Yaser 'Arafat financial aid, the treasury minister answered: "Yes." But, in the same breath he added: "We will not finance the autonomy. It is absurd for us to do this. If we start giving the autonomy money, the countries of the world will never give them the funds that they obligated themselves to do." Shohet spoke these words in response to Yaser 'Arafat's words (HA'ARETZ, 3 August) that he was in despair, because he had no money to finance the salaries of workers and police. That is, he does not have the money to rule. In modern politics, one who cannot sign a check is considered dead.

So, it is proper for Israel to implement the Paris accord as it is written. Israel handed the tax and tariff funds, and the rest of the deductions from employees in the territories, amounting to \$2.3 million, to the autonomy. In the best case, we are speaking of handing over \$10 million by the end of the year. This is a tiny amount when faced with the autonomy's budget, which, by the end of this year will amount to \$450 million—and the coffers are totally empty.

It is true that 'Arafat has not succeeded in building an independent tax system in the territories, but what could

be collected anyhow, when the average income per capita is \$1,000 per year—one-eighth of Israel's income level. He has no "country on its way," he has no Jewish Agency, and he has no Histadrut. The countries of the world claim that, until he establishes a mechanism organized to receive donations, that is, a sort of central bank or organized treasury ministry, they will not hand him the funds that they promised him.

But the countries of Europe will have no problem when Yaser 'Arafat falls. They will have no problem when Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] seizes power, borne on the spears of hunger and disappointment. Only we will have the most serious problem, because none of us want to return to rule over Gaza.

The American secretary of state, George Marshall, had a similar problem at the end of World War II. Europe was ruined, and Marshall led a program for the reconstruction of the Western countries. He feared that the poverty, unemployment, and hunger that prevailed in these countries would expand and result in the spread of communist ideas in the countries of western Europe and the collapse of their regimes.

The Marshall Plan aided 16 European countries. During the years 1948 to 1952, the United States channeled \$12 billion to them, and thus, it built the economic miracle called Germany, despite the millions of losses and the burning hatred. Thus, apparently, Marshall prevented a third world war. He won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1953.

Gaza now needs a "Marshall Plan," and it is in Israel's interest to be the leader of such a plan. To this end, Israel needs to convince the countries that obligated themselves, 15 in number, to hand over the funds without quibbling over the quality of the organization. If there is a real problem of an untrustworthy organization, Israel can help in the construction of an appropriate organization. We have a great deal of experience in matters such as these. But this is not enough. The Israeli Government must reach deeply into its pocket and hand over money to 'Arafat without being bound to the small print of the Paris accord.

The treasury minister will shortly present another budget to the Knesset. In this budget, he will devote 750 million shekels for peace expenditures, that is, for the Israel Defense Forces' (IDF) new preparations, the police, and the settlements in the wake of the autonomy accord. It is fitting to add to another subclause to this expenditure clause for a Marshall Plan for Gaza; and through this budget clause, to hand over tens of millions of dollars to 'Arafat, so that he can get on his feet and rule. This is the real investment in peace. Every dollar will bring ten times the profit. It is much better to live next to a rich neighbor than a hungry and poor neighbor. George Marshall understood this well.

Strength of New 'Antipoliticians' Assessed

94AA0105A Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 5 Aug 94
pp 27-28, 30, 32

[Article by M. Peleg: "I Shall Decide, I Shall Navigate"]

[Text] They are paving their way to the top with dizzying speed: Within a few months, sometimes weeks, they burst forth behind the scenes or out of complete anonymity to conquer millions of hearts, sweeping aside long-time, polished politicians and becoming leaders of movements, members of parliament, and prime ministers. They have something new to offer, they say. They promise success, money, charisma, new youth; they speak in a simple language that any child could understand, like a soft-drink commercial. The contents of their slogans are similar: sparkling, sweet, refreshing for a moment, leaving you with an empty can in your hand. They are the new folk heroes, tailored for the dimensions of television, successful in the "do-it-yourself" mode. They did not raise up dust in the gray hallways of a party and did not waste time in committees, meetings or waiting for a change in government leadership; they simply set up their own party, a one-man party.

Billionaire Ross Perot convinced 20 percent of the voters in the United States to elect him president, an awesome achievement for an independent candidate in the American two-party system—the highest since 1929. Media magnate Silvio Berlusconi was elected prime minister of Italy only two months after announcing his entry into the political arena and officially joining the election campaign. French industrialist Bernard Tapie was appointed as a minister in Pierre Beregovoy's government in 1992, got involved in fraud cases, resigned, returned to parliament, got involved again and his privileges were revoked—and, despite this, last month won more than 12 percent in the European parliamentary elections in France, only 2.5 percent less than President Francois Mitterrand's Socialist Party slate.

Berlusconi, Perot, and Tapie are the more distinguished among the new popularly elected, but are not the only ones. In Israel, too, as Professor Shlomo Avineri of the faculty of political sciences at the Hebrew University attests, the spring of populist politicians is being indicated. They, indeed, differ from their colleagues in Europe and the United States; they do not have financial empires and millions to heave into them; Israeli society still feels more respect for the army man and politician than for the businessman, although the peace accords and normalization are changing the order of preferences. But, here, too, Avineri says, something happened: Rafa'el Eytan and Hayim Ramon, who succeeded in winning a place in the government at the head of a one-man slate, each in his own way belongs to the Berlusconi era.

In Europe, they speak explicitly of the dawn of a new era: Representative democracy, characterized by the party system, is making way for a public opinion democracy, a supposedly direct democracy in which direct dialogue between the politicians and those who elected him is conducted; the intermediaries, institutions, and political bodies sink and disappear; the legal system, media, and public opinion polls dictate political decisions. Following his first public appearance on television in 1985,

Bernard Tapie declared: "I have screwed you all, because there are no more intermediaries between me and the French.... I have conducted a direct dialogue with the people, and they believed me!" But the term "dialogue" is misleading: Essentially, a one-sided talk is being conducted. The new politician, indeed, reaches you directly in the living room—but, he hears you only in the polling booth; at most, the telephone rings and the survey institute asks you to grade the last appearance of the leader-entertainer on television. Perhaps it is not "1984," but it is also not exactly Utopia.

Life on the Screen

The new politicians differ from one another. In the traditional division between left and right, most are pulling to the right, but all of them belong to the "post—" era—they are post-socialists, post-Fascists, and perhaps also post-democrats. Most of them are successful businessmen, wealthy men who started out with nothing and made millions. More than once, they also lost them. One of the common characteristics is humble beginnings: Berlusconi, in his youth, used to appear as a singer on cruise ships. When he studied engineering at the university, he sold prepared lessons to his friends, "not for money, but for other favors." He began to build his empire through subcontracting deals. Ross Perot was an officer in the American Navy who got released from duty before the end of his service and opened a business. Tapie, son of a plumber, held temporary jobs, managed a team of bicycle racers and had short-lived success as a singer, until he started buying failing factories with bank loans.

When they turn to their voting public, the populists emphasize the fact that they built themselves with their "10 fingers"; instead of speaking about an ideological platform, they offer a personal example for the realization of the capitalist dream: See how I made out in life; why should I not do this for you, or—in the style of one of our charlatans—for the country?

More than anything else, the populists are united by their regard for the most popular medium, television: They love it and it loves them. "Televiser—ergo sum, in Latin: 'I appear on television, therefore I am,'" Avineri summarizes the phenomenon. "Television creates privatization of public lives. Until the television era, if you wanted to be involved in public matters, you had to go to meetings, participate in committees and conferences, read reports, orient yourself. You could not manage this alone in your room; you did this together with others. Now, a person can stay home without ever being exposed to a real public situation, but be exposed to a lot of information and motivation on public issues through television. This creates a certain amount of passiveness, because the one who previously went to the meetings, also ended up participating; he elected and was elected; now it is possible to get exposed to public issues and sit down while cracking open pistachio nuts. Television always wants a personal story, and these leaders turn in

a personal way and they can be photographed. When they compete in the existing, established parties, the parties are in distress, because a party is an institution—and institutions do not photograph well."

Ross Perot spent \$60 million out of his own pocket on his race for the presidency of the United States—the largest sum ever spent by a candidate in an American election campaign. The money went primarily to the television networks: Perot purchased valuable screen time to turn to the nation in half-hour broadcasts. He also appeared with countless interviewers and inundated the morning programs, and, as a rule, preferred the electronic medium over public assemblies, conferences, and meetings, which have always been the election campaign symbol in the United States. Essentially, he acknowledged that he decided to run for the presidency following the enthusiastic responses to his appearance on his friend Larry King's interview program on the CNN network.

Television loved him back: Forty-seven percent of the 70 million viewers of debates in which he participated thought that his appearance was the most successful of the three candidates, as opposed to 30 percent who preferred Clinton and 16 percent for Bush. The attention given by Perot and his advisers to the medium went to the smallest details, even to the movement of his eyelids in front of the camera. The morning after the first debate, Perot pointed out proudly that he blinked only seven times a minute, while Clinton blinked 40 times and Bush—57 times.

Except that Perot, in contrast to Berlusconi, did everything except win; and one of the factors that gave him trouble was the media's reservations. He got widespread exposure, but, at the same time, criticism that depicted him more than once as a character. From a survey of American newspapers conducted in the United States after the elections, it became clear that 149 newspapers recommended that readers elect Clinton, 121 endorsed George Bush, and only two, Ross Perot. When Silvio Berlusconi embarked on his successful campaign this year, he knew that this would not happen to him. His first action was to fire Indro Montanelli, one of the most experienced reporters in Italy and editor of the leading newspaper in his possession, *L'INDIPENDENTE*. He replaced him with one of his new adjutants. Berlusconi did not operate on impulse, he left no loose ends, and he did not have to worry about his relationship with the media: He bought it a few years before he went into politics.

The 1980's were the *dolce vita* period of new innovators and people who got rich in Italy. Berlusconi took a decisive step in his career when he expanded the construction and insurance businesses he owned to the realm of electronic media. Under the auspices of his patron, Benito Craxi, head of the Socialist Party (who was asked, when the time came, to be the official godfather of one of Berlusconi's five children), an

amendment to the law was made that enabled him to own Italy's three largest commercial television channels, as well as cable television. His company, Fininvest, controlled 45 percent of the viewing in Italy, an almost-monopoly over broadcasting means, an extent unprecedented in any other Western democracy. Subsidiaries of Fininvest, Publitalia, and Tele Piu, controlled the sale of commercial territories in broadcast and pay TV, and became leaders in the country. In 1986, Berlusconi purchased the Milan soccer team during one of its slumps, put money and hired players into it, and made a run for a series of championships.

In the early 1990's, Berlusconi purchased the largest publishing house in Italy, Mondadori, and became owner of dozens of daily newspapers, weeklies, and monthly magazines. The protests of leftist opposition parliament members did not help; Berlusconi's socialist friends looked out for his privileges. LA REPUBLICA, Italy's widely distributed newspaper, barely escaped him after a lengthy legal battle.

Berlusconi brought America to Italy: He plastered television with sparkling entertainment shows and cheap amusement. His viewers got addicted to raffles for washing machines and long-legged blondes who melt on top of dishwashers. Afterward, they got a new-style news edition from him—dynamic, yellow, with an emphasis on small-time murders and a moderator who explained who the good guys and bad guys were. In 1994, they went to the polls to elect "Mr. Television"; he called for them to stand up for the ideology of consumption and waved the communist threat, which had essentially disappeared from the world, over their heads.

In the years 1992 to 1993, the coalition parties in Italy collapsed, in the wake of exposing corruption and blackmail episodes by judges-interrogators from Milano. The purification campaign known as "clean-handiness" removed the scorched ground in all government bodies, starting in the parliament and the top administration and including the financial elite and company directors. Berlusconi, himself, was not harmed, despite the fact that his brothers and some directors of his companies were arrested and interrogated. But Berlusconi's friends still did not sit in the proper places: the Socialist Party fell apart and was eradicated, and Craxi, the good godfather, disappeared from view to a villa in Tunisia. He remains there to this day, while a detention order and a lengthy charge sheet await him in his homeland; if he returns to Italy, he will spend the next eight years in prison.

In the meantime, the Democratic Left Party, formerly the Communist Party, a progressive left-wing bloc, was formed. According to all early forecasts, in March 1994, for the first time in the history of the Republic, the left stood to win the election. Berlusconi knew that his privileges were destined to go the way of his friend, Craxi. And then, he entered the race for prime minister,

which was the most glittering *colpo di scena*—the dramatic turning point in the language of Italian opera—since the days of Mussolini. His battle cry was "to stop the Red danger."

Within less than four months, Fininvest established 13,000 fan clubs throughout Italy, built on the model of the soccer world and that were also called, inspired by it, "Go Italy" ("Forza Italia"). Fininvest's marketing and publicity experts chose young candidates with appropriate backgrounds and a clean-cut appearance that "passed the screen test," built them an image, gave them suitable business suits and, more important than anything—gave them crash courses for appearing on television. But these were merely the planets, which were intended to orbit for a great distance around the sun: When "Go Italy" became a party, it was a one-man party.

At the end of January 1994, two months before the election date, Berlusconi presented his candidacy using marketing strategies for everything. His best directors and image people prepared cards for him with a direct speech to the nation. The 57-year-old man appeared to the viewers well made-up, charming and younger than his age, strikingly dressed, sitting at a traditional, elegant desk, next to him a picture of his (second) wife and children, and behind him Milan's sparkling trophies. The tape was distributed and broadcast on all Italian television stations, although only Fininvest's stations broadcast it in full. The Cavalier (an official title awarded to him by the president of the republic) announced to Italy that he was leaving his magnificent villa near Milano and was coming to Rome to save the country.

The Ego Sacrifice

The image of the knight on the white horse galloping to save the country from ruin is a central component in the saga of the populist leader. Stanislaw Tyminski, a Polish leader who returned to his country after being gone for 20 years and was almost elected president there, was given the nickname "the black horse." The adventurer who got rich in Canada and the Amazon jungles appeared in Poland smacking of simplicity on the eve of its first democratic elections, on his lips the tidings of plenty. He conducted a glittering, American-style election campaign, flew by helicopter between provincial towns, surrounded himself with bodyguards and sold his book of spiritual experiences, "Holy Dogs," to many.

To the shock of Solidarity members, the unknown man became the matched competitor of Lech Walesa for the presidency, after he beat Tadeusz Mazowiecki—a veteran Solidarity man and prime minister of Poland at that time—in the first round. A voter who was asked why he voted for Tyminski replied: "Because I do not know him." Many voters said of Tyminski that he was "the only man capable of injecting new blood in to the country," and for a few suspenseful weeks, it seemed that

after all the years of struggle by the Solidarity movement against the communist regime, it would actually be the immigrant Tyminski who would harvest the fruits of victory.

In the second and decisive round, Walesa succeeded in overcoming Tyminski (75 percent to 25 percent). Polish honor was saved, but one of Solidarity's intellectual's, Adam Michnik, plastered the victor: "Tyminski is a caricature of the political style that you, Lech, initiated." "Stan" Tyminski was forced to pack up his passports (he had many, including a Libyan passport) and his [?Peruvian] wife and flee back to Canada because of slander suits: in the meanwhile, it turned out that even his millions were questionable. He returned again to Poland to run in the parliamentary elections, was registered, at the head of an anti-Semitic, extremist, rightist party called "X", but, this time, was expelled even before the elections after being accused of forging signatures for the slate.

In the United States, Ross Perot has made an impression on many Americans that he is bursting forth from his property in Texas and his successful businesses only because his obligation to the country is calling him. "I have no experience in creating a \$4 trillion debt; I have no experience in paralyzing government, for which no man bears responsibility...but I have experience in getting things done," Perot told his potential voters when he presented them with the miracle pill called a "free market." Unlike Tyminski, Perot was not a failed adventurer. He not only spoke of millions, he also spent them, and even the newspapers—which enjoyed joking about his big ears—treated him, in the end, with respect, as one who made his opponents focus on the economic problems of the United States.

But, even Perot's popularity, like that of Tyminski, Berlusconi, and the like, was the result of the fact that he came from the outside. The new leader tries to create an image of a popular man, with roots; a private man who was not involved in government, and to whom the sore evils of the establishment did not adhere. This, of course, is a delusion: Anyone who brings about deals on such a large scale as Perot or Berlusconi is dependent on government contracts, rubs up against politicians or senior clerks in the halls, and enjoys the fruits of the establishment, even when they are rotten.

The anti-establishment image works wonders. In a recently conducted survey by the French weekly, L'EXPRESS, it was found that 66 percent of the French loathe the political elite in their country. Almost 43 percent of those who can vote in France do not vote at all or throw a blank card into the ballot box; many of the others give protest votes to "outside" candidates, as did voters for Perot in the United States and those who put the neofascist bloc, the northern league, and Berlusconi in power in Italy. The L'EXPRESS survey also revealed surprising differences in the perception of the meaning of citizenship: The good citizen of the 1990's observes

the rules of driving on the road and does not pollute the environment; voting in elections—the first foundation in a democracy—took only seventh place on the scale.

"The existence of democracy," says Professor Avineri, "is moderated by the regular activity of institutional frameworks, such as parties, volunteer organizations, unions, and social associations. By nature, such frameworks undergo bureaucratic processes and become rigid, often an association with a tinge of corruption. One of the paradoxes of modern democracy is that the more successful they are, the more the establishment frameworks grow and expand, and in the era of mass media, they also need larger sums of money. All of this creates a very vast, hierarchical system, with the potential to grow distant and unfamiliar with the real life of a significant part of the population. One of the accompanying phenomena of modern democracy is the sense of discomfort with the existence of the same parties and organizations that are essential to the existence of the democracy."

The populist leader supplies an answer to this discomfort: He speaks in the first person. A French research institute conducted a fascinating analysis of the text that Bernard Tapie uttered on the interview program "The Hour of Truth," and compared it to that of Michel Rochard, who opposed him in the European parliamentary elections, at the head of the socialist slate. Five percent of the words that Tapie used in the interview were various forms of use of the first person; he said "I" 280 times, the record for any "The Hour of Truth" programs that were examined. He also quoted himself four times in the third person. The institute director pointed out that even General de Gaulle, in 13 years of appearing on television, did not quote himself more than three times. Rochard, in contrast, used "we"; this is perhaps more humble, the researcher pointed out, but is not recommended for use in the media, because it is perceived as the speaker evading direct responsibility.

The Soccer Strategy

Bernard Tapie, age 51, is the popular hero who is managing to beat the system and glide upwards without a word of criticism adhering to him. In France there are other populist leaders, more senior than he, such as Jean Marie Le Pen, of the National Front, and Philippe [?de Villiers], the Gaullist; but it is Tapie who—in contrast to the others, he leans to the left—is considered in France to be similar to the great Berlusconi. Both of them, without a doubt, share a common strategy, which was taken from a place where they are well oriented: the soccer field.

Berlusconi used to appear for his team's games like the American President arriving for election gatherings: in a helicopter painted in the team colors. More than in any other of his projects, Berlusconi tasted glory in the stadium with Milan; and as a marketing wizard, the hidden potential of the enormous popularity of the game did not escape him. Berlusconi understood much before

the sociologists that the new opium of the masses was soccer, and he copied the tactics, colors, slogans, fan clubs, and the calls of encouragement for the political field.

In 1986, Bernard Tapie also bought a soccer team, Olympic Marseilles, and brought it to the top of European soccer. Tapie's adventure with Marseilles is typical of his twisted road in politics. When the team reached its peak and won the European championship, in 1992, its owner was the minister of urban affairs in the government of Pierre Bergovoy. A short time after winning the championship, a scandal broke out when it turned out that Olympic's manager—Jean-Pierre [?Bersns], Tapie's right-hand man—bought a game in the league's early phase; and Bernard Tapie was forced to resign from the government in May 1992, a few weeks after being appointed, after his former business partner brought a fraud claim against him. But, just as a soccer team does not lose its sworn fans in difficult times, support for Tapie also remained after the law suits, scandals, and tumbles that would have put an end to a politician from the ranks long ago.

Tapie, differing from Berlusconi, is not a completely new face in politics. Francois Mitterand noticed his potential back when he decided to run for mayor of the municipality of Marseilles as an independent candidate in 1989, and with the support of the Socialist Party, he overcame the right-wing candidate. In the same year, Tapie won a place of honor when he defeated Jean Marie Le Pen in an incredible, disgraceful debate in front of television cameras. The burnishing of swords with the French fascist became his visitor's card, and the left discovered in him a man who is capable of beating the voters of the extreme right in their home court, southern France. In 1992, he contested Le Pen in the regional elections in Provence; they both lost, but Tapie's popularity among the youth, immigrants, and residents of poor neighborhoods caused Pierre Bergovois to invite him to serve in his government.

At the same time, the popular millionaire was in debt up to his neck. He promised that he would resign from the management of the German sporting goods company, Adidas, which he controlled in 1990, to avoid a conflict of interests during his tenure in the government; before he managed to resign from Adidas, he was forced to resign from the government. Two months later, the financial state of Bernard Tapie's financial company reached such a low point that Adidas was put up for sale, and, in August 1992, Tapie's company announced that its shares would no longer be traded on the stock exchange. In the meanwhile, Tapie succeeded in coming out well from the legal claims against him and returned to serve as minister until the fall of the socialist government.

In 1993, he was elected to parliament as a hinge for the "radicals of the left," and in December, parliament revoked his privileges because of an investigation into

irregularities in his companies. Since then, Tapie has managed to withstand a series of claims of business fraud and tax evasions; the stock exchange monitoring committee imposed a 1-million-franc fine on him; parliament again revoked his privileges last June; his debts continue to swell; and all this did not darken his sex appeal in the eyes of the French. Just the opposite. Twelve percent of them gave him their votes in the elections for the European parliament, and a survey conducted last month showed that, among the youth, ages 18 to 30, he is the left's leading candidate remaining in elections for the presidency of France, with an identical rate of support to that of the current prime minister, rightist Edouard Balladur. Tapie is in third place among all voters. In considering all of this, it is no wonder that President Mitterand is ready to ignore his party's official candidates and bet on Tapie as the winning horse.

"From a certain aspect, Tapie's reflexes—the reflexes of a scoundrel—are protecting French democracy," writes economist and political science researcher Alan Mink in a book warning of the danger to democracy with the rise of populists. Mink believes that "just as Le Pen is limited by his extremism—which is opposed to French society's tolerance values—so Tapie limits his immorality, a fact which is known to all. But, if we imagine Tapie as one who will decide to behave well in a few years... I do not know what the limits will be to such a phenomenon."

And it is not at all certain that Tapie will have behave well in order to reach the top. Here is Silvio Berlusconi, with \$2.6 million in debts, a few cloudy chapters in his past (such as belonging to secret office P.2 of the Freemasons, who have made extreme right-wing ties to the government), ties known to all with Italy's most corrupt man, Benito Craxi, and even without a drop of Tapie's kind of cunning charm was elected prime minister.

It Is My Business

"That is the beauty of private companies: You do not have to report on it to anybody," said Ross Perot, when estimates of the value of his businesses were published and he refused to confirm or deny them (Perot's property, primarily companies in the computer field and immovable property, is estimated at \$2.4 billion, and he is No. 19 out of 73 billionaires in the United States). This sentence, this motto, epitomizes the manner of thinking of the lonely racer to the top. It enables him to get far quickly, because no cumbersome party organization stands in his way and he does not have to account to anybody; but, the moment he enters politics, it becomes evident to him that public affairs have different rules.

Bill Clinton absorbed destructive criticism, pressures, and accusations no less than Ross Perot during the election campaign (and continues to today, as president). Just the opposite. He withstood it, Perot no. The Texas billionaire responded angrily when they dug into his past and refused to relate to questions about his business. The press emphasized his centralized and dictatorial manner

of management, and his degrading treatment of his employees. What would happen if such a man were to sit in the White House? The answer can now be given in Italy. Silvio Berlusconi is also a man who is used to managing an empire, surrounded by "yes men," ordering his aides like an army of servicemen. When he became prime minister, he crowned his aides officers and deputies. Three months after starting his job, he published a government order limiting the authority of the legal system, and was surprised to find out that someone dared to rebel against him.

"Democracy," says Shlomo Avineri, "is a very complex system of checks and balances. Sometimes, this results in a slowdown in the speed of democratic activity, but it also ensures that matters will not be done overnight arbitrarily, based on a decision that cannot be reversed. The populist leader is not tied down to institutions, and usually, also has no party or existing institution. This is his great appeal, the fact that he appears, as it were, as a man, personal, subjective, before all subjects of the nation, and not some anonymous body, such as the executive committee, central committee, or treasurership. These are terms that always remain abstract and create a sense of alienation. But, here is what happens to a man like Berlusconi when he must operate in a constitutional framework as prime minister: He discovers that there are checks, there are laws."

Avineri believes that, despite the danger lurking for democracy from the rise of populists, the system of checks is liable to subdue people like Berlusconi: Either his domineering nature will cause an explosion, or he will become domesticated and will learn to work with the system. In the meanwhile, the Italian media magnate does not show signs of domestication. He lost in his first battle with the judges, was forced to cancel, under the pressure of his government associates, the order that he published, and last week, two of his most senior directors were arrested, as was his brother, Paulo, who now takes his place as head of the empire. The official reaction of the Italian prime minister was a speech to the nation—which was broadcast in full on the news on his television channels—in which he declared an open war with judicial authorities. "If the judges want to determine the laws and lead economic policy, they must put themselves up for election and obtain a majority mandate from the people," Berlusconi insolently said in an outburst of anger.

"When the fourth authority, the media, wants to take over the government, the result is a dictatorship," said Professor Umberto Ecco, during Italy's election campaign, when he was drafted for a war to the hilt against Silvio Berlusconi. The well-known author and semiologist did not hesitate to describe Berlusconi and his associates as a "threat to civilization." But, even now, when it is totally clear that the media magnate has entered politics clearly out of personal and business interests, a large part of the nation still believes his promises to make a "second economic miracle" happen,

to create "a million new jobs" out of nothing, and to lower the tax ceiling. Just as the French are willing to believe a swindler like Bernard Tapie, when he promises them personally that he will take care to "wipe out unemployment among the youth not outside of the law."

In a country lacking democratic tradition, like Peru, the election of this type of redeeming knight leads directly to a dictatorship. Alberto Fujimori, the son of Japanese immigrants, a professor of mathematics who was a land owner by right of his ties to the previous regime, succeeded in defeating author Mario Vargas LLosa in the presidential elections in 1990. The professor, who entered the media as a moderator on an interview program for government television, promised to save Peru's economy. The voters, who were fed up with politics, believed that the professor would make them rich and successful, more Japanese than the Japanese. At the time of the election campaign, Fujimori was aided by the services of a questionable military man, Vladimiro Montesinos, in order to stop publications regarding his tax evasions. Two years later, Montesinos helped him execute a substantial revolt. Parliament was dispersed so that: "it would be possible to fight the drug merchants and the mafia," and Fujimori was Peru's sole ruler.

In the classical political framework, the ruler must also get a majority within his party, says Professor Avineri. "Very strong personalities, such as Ben-Gurion, struggled hard and continuously all of their lives to get decisions passed. Rafa'el Eytan and even more so Hayim Ramon are a new phenomenon in Israel, from this aspect of one man seizing control without any obligations to institutions." In Avineri's opinion, the characterization of Berlusconi, Tapie, and the like as businessmen is coincidental; breaking through the framework is the determining factor, and Eytan and Ramon definitely answer the definition of the phenomenon. "The great attraction of the two, each to his own realm and method, is personalness. It is the approach of 'let us manage affairs and I will solve the problems in a jiffy,' it is the sincere, simple speech and the disregard for institutions."

One of Rafa'el Eytan's beautiful sayings after Tzomet's great achievement in the 1992 elections was: "Likud and Labor are two rotten apricots, and the worms have not yet gnawed at Tzomet." And now, when he is still at the beginning of the season, the worms have uncovered the accounting books of Tzomet by the members of his faction. His people's involvements, within the party and in the high court of justice, attest, in Avineri's opinion, to their inability to function within a parliamentary framework; even the state comptroller bothers them; Tzomet, apparently, is a phenomenon destined to disappear.

Avineri gives Ramon a better chance, among other reasons, because of the weakness of the monitoring staff in the Histadrut and the fact that it always had a majority of one party in it. "The way in which Hayim

Ramon operates, or at least declares that he operates, attests to the centralization of decisions in the hands of one man. As in every situation of populist leaders, danger lurks here. There are no institutions that he is obligated to inform if he closes DAVAR or not. And the announcement concerning the reduction of staff in the executive committee: I am certain that every business or public works would be jealous if he could fire 60 percent of the employees! I do not know if he can really do that, but the declarations are such. He can say this, because there is no institutional framework over him, and his faction in the Histadrut is, to a certain extent, a continuation of his personality. Nor have I heard Hayim Ramon say, as one would have expected, that the most important thing now is to build a serious control system for the Histadrut."

"I do not know to what extent the slogan 'new life in the Histadrut' will prove itself," says Professor Hava 'Etzioni Halevi, a sociologist whose area of expertise is politics, "but it will certainly be 'a hard life in the Histadrut,' because Hayim Ramon has put himself in a trap: On one hand, he rose up on the standard of one who would smash, or more correctly, would cut, the staff; but, on the other hand he will need the staff to survive in the political campaign. He cannot cut the branch on which he sits. In the end, it seems to me that the renewal will not hold up, and there will not be a great difference between him and the previous secretary generals."

'Etzioni Halevi expects that in Israel, as in the United States, the weakening of the parties will cause the strong ties, regardless, between parties and capital will grow stronger. In her book, "The Connection Between the Elite and Democracy in Israel," she deals, among other things, with the circle of benefits between the two realms. "Businessmen contribute to the party and receive benefits, employ Knesset members in additional transactions or supply them with office expenses that help them in the elections," she says. "In return, these Knesset members intercede on their behalf. In the episode of the regulation of bank shares, for example—why did it take so long to bring the bank heads to court? There was enormous pressure on the government's judicial adviser not to take them to court, and the pressure came from the politicians to whose parties the bankers contribute; these were politicians from the two major parties. The advisor succumbed to the pressure until the high court of justice essentially forced him to press charges."

Now, as Israel enters the era of primaries, money will take an even more important place in politics. And as the first election campaign in which a prime minister is elected directly draws near, the heads of the two major parties, Yitzhak Rabin and Binyamin Netanyahu, are behaving as if the party organization is an overlapping excess destined to shortly leave the world.

The rise of populists and the sinking of party institutions in Western countries is one of the accompanying phenomena of the end of old ideologies. With the collapse of

the communist regime in eastern Europe, gone is the threatening "evil empire," which the party establishment in the west had waved over the heads of the voters. "It is not a coincidence," says Shlomo Avineri, "that the campaign against corruption in Italy started after the Berlin wall fell."

As long as the communist threat lurked at the door, the Italian legal system would not dare to crumble the establishment as it has in the past two years, for fear that, thus, it would forfeit the country to the enemy to the east and its supporters from within. In the United States, as well, 20 percent of the voters would not have chosen a billionaire without a concept of foreign policy and national security as long as it was possible to depict the Russian bear on the propaganda maps. In Israel, a similar process is occurring, also resulting indirectly from the disappearance of the Soviet Union. The peace process and the expansion of electronic media to dozens of television channels are equipping the ground for change. "Israeli society feels itself much less threatened," says Professor Avineri. "There are, indeed, still problems of personal security, but the sense of 'existential anxiety' has lessened. Israel is starting to become a modern society, and a process analogous to that in the west is happening here."

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[Article by Tz. Bar'el: "The Search for Friends"]

[Text] What does Hosni Mubarak have that Warren Christopher does not? Why did Mubarak return from Syria radiating optimism and Christopher look like he swallowed a bottle of spoiled vinegar? Is it the Egyptian jokes that cause al-Asad to laugh or is it the pilots' guild that draws them so close together? Perhaps the fact that al-Asad served for a period of time in Egypt draws him close to the ra'is and, perhaps, their age? There are those who say that there is no friendship between the two, only interests and suspicion. Others maintain that if al-Asad has a friend in the Arab world, it is Mubarak. Is loneliness at all a factor with al-Asad?

It seems as though, when al-Asad looks around him, he meets up only with enemies and traitors. Here is King Hussein, who, up to a month ago, wholeheartedly promised that Jordan would not go for a separate peace accord with Israel; who does abominable things to 'Arafat no less than to al-Asad; who was already about to sign a sweeping economic agreement with Syria, betrayed him at the last moment and went to lean on Rabin's shoulder. And, perhaps, al-Asad should not have expected total loyalty from the king, not after the Syrian invasion of Jordan in 1970 and not after the war of terrorism between them, when the intention to sign an accord with Israel in 1985 became known.

Turkey is to the north. A bit of an ally, a bit of an enemy. They hold the Syrian water sources in their hands and

are conducting an inexplicable romance with Iraq, blaming Syria for giving refuge to the leaders of the rebellious Kurds. Turkey, with all of its weaknesses, is a superpower relative to Syria. It is a North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) member and enjoys vast American backing, while the traditional Syrian backer, the Soviet Union, has disappeared as if it never existed. Only the debts remain. The spare parts that Russia is now prepared to supply Syria, and its willingness to authorize the overdraft, stands at \$12 billion, likening their relationship to that of a limited customer with his bank manager.

Lebanon is an ally by force. The al-Ta'if accord of 1989 turned Lebanon into a dependent of Syria and granted unlimited authorization for the continued presence of the Syrian army in Lebanon. But, this domination is not without conditions. It imposes on Syria not only the responsibility for Lebanon's peace, but also, for something additional, which can be defined as the "well-being of the citizens." This well-being is getting nullified due to the fighting between the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) and the Hizballah. The pressure on the Lebanese Government, the product of Syria's creation, is increasing, and the voices of opposition are increasingly calling for Syria's departure and the domination of the Lebanese army over the southern regions and the Valley, meaning neutralizing the Hizballah's military power. A hot border with Israel is, perhaps, a certain advantage for Syria and bargaining chip in negotiations, but, probably, when balancing everything, Syria prefers a quiet, submissive Lebanon over continuous pressure that is liable to involve them even more in Lebanon.

The "service" that Syria is giving the Hizballah is also generous pay for the unwritten alliance with Iran. The problem with Iran is that they are a non-Arab ally, they have no money, they connect Syria with a country that, in the eyes of the West, has a bad reputation, and they are starting, by themselves, to seek other allies, including Iraq.

And Iraq is deeply hated by al-Asad and is a true military enemy. It is true that, in 1979, an alliance was almost signed between Syria and Iraq, in the framework of which the Iraqi president, Ahmad Hasan al-Bakr, was to serve as number one, al-Asad as his deputy, and Saddam Husayn as number three. The alliance was intended to present a united Arab front against Egypt, whose president, al-Sadat, had already delivered his speech to the Knesset. But, when al-Asad reached Baghdad to expedite the establishment of the alliance, Saddam Husayn did not even come to greet him. A month later, he rejected al-Bakr and appointed himself president. The idea of the alliance was removed from the agenda.

This was not the first time that Syria was prepared to bow its head, provided that it did not concede alone. The search for members created the lauded union of Syria and Egypt in 1958, the UAC, the United Arab Commonwealth, as it was called in Hebrew [as published]—to

avoid the threatened abbreviation, UAR, the United Arab Republic. This union was established at Syria's initiative, and under disgraceful conditions, until the Syrians were prepared to give agricultural plots to Egyptian farmers, so as not to recall the total control that they gave to Nasser in the realm of foreign policy and parts of the army. This was a desperate attempt that was almost forced on Nasser, when the entire Syrian Government appeared one day in February and seated themselves in his palace and practically told him that they came to suffer martyrdom.

After signing the union accord, the president of Syria, Shukri al-Quwwatli, told Nasser: "If you only knew, your excellency, from what a heavy burden you have delivered me, a burden of 5 million Syrians, half of whom claim the throne of leadership, a quarter of them see themselves as prophets, and 10 percent think that they are gods. You are going to people who worship God, as well as fire, as well as Satan. And you waited until I signed my name to tell me these things?" asked Nasser.

Al-Asad, then a 1st Lieutenant in the Syrian Air Force, returned from a year of study and training in the Soviet Union and was surprised to see an officers' club to which he belonged and a Ba'ath Party club turned lifeless. More than that, his MiG-29 squadron had been sent to Egypt, and there he found himself frequenting the famous cafes in Cairo, while a hostile Egyptian society, that did not view the Syrians as allies, but as a burden and an affliction, surrounded him. The alliance, which was accepted in Syria with rejoicing, fell apart with a great noise in 1961. The Egyptian colonialism, the rigid tariff laws that Egypt imposed on Syrian goods, the suppression of the Ba'ath Party, and the authority of secret agents that Egypt imposed—all of these destroyed them.

The disappointment with Nasser and Egypt did not really hinder the alliance in the face of the Yom Kippur war, at the end of which al-Asad absorbed another Egyptian blow. Al-Sadat, the ally, the friend for weapons, fighting, and failure, decided to sign an accord for the separation of forces behind al-Asad's back. Al-Sadat, through hints and cloudy missives, hid from al-Asad that this was the course he was going to take. It was Henry Kissinger, in the end, who brought al-Asad the news. Al-Asad, who wanted to punish Egypt and did not present himself at the Geneva conference, merely played into the hands of the United States, which obtained a separate accord between Egypt and Israel.

And now, al-Asad again finds himself searching for friends, and, again, he finds himself on one front with Egypt. Apparently, Mubarak plays only the role of the courier. He updates al-Asad on his talks with Rabin, Fahd, and 'Arafat; he brings messages from Syria to Israel and the United States, and he tries, in his own way, to influence Syria to join the process. Mubarak is personally contributing his experience to al-Asad and "interprets" Israel and the United States for him. But, Syria is not an ostracized country. It does not need an

emissary. Al-Asad can telephone Clinton or Christopher at any time to say his piece. He can continue to conduct direct negotiations with Israel via his messengers or open a direct, secret channel; and, perhaps, such a channel already exists.

Al-Asad is now probably seeking a new alliance. Unlike the Egypt of Nasser and al-Sadat, which determined a position and proceeded independently out of recognition of its strength and its standing, even when the other Arab countries gave it a cold shoulder, Syria has always sought alliances. If this interpretation is correct, then an inclusive peace—the failed definition that fell apart—was not created by the Syrians in order to take care of the interests of all countries in the struggle, but, so as not to exclude Syria from the whole. Even now, after Egypt has already given its signature to peace, the Palestinians have separated, and Jordan is making final amendments to the copy of the accord, Syria is talking about an all-inclusive peace. So that Syria will be able to say that it did not withdraw from this definition as well as to progress in the process, it needs an ally who is well thought of in the Arab world. That cannot be Jordan, certainly not 'Arafat or Lebanon. Al-Asad cannot be a collapsing piece in the game of dominoes.

Mubarak's Egypt can give al-Asad what he, perhaps, wants. An alliance of equals between Syria and Egypt, totally different from the cowardly structure of the UAC, could dictate new conditions in the Middle East. This is the strongest Arab backing that al-Asad could get in the face of a real or imagined coalition that could threaten Syria. This is also an excellent guarantee for suitable Israeli behavior toward him, because Egypt holds the most important asset of the peace process: a signed peace accord. This is also Mubarak's advantage over Christopher. American money and foreign investments are also important assets, but Saudi Arabia could also give—and does give—this. American weapons could also be a white elephant in an army trained in Soviet weaponry and tactics; peace accords are only a partial guarantee between two suspicious countries like Israel and Syria. The Golan Heights have waited for so many years, it can wait some more. But the behavior of the Arab world—and if only with the participation of another Arab superpower—is a double gain, and it is also a possible formula for the impossible equation of inclusive peace and a separate accord.

Syrian Water Demands in Negotiations Examined

94AA0105B Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 5 Aug 94
p B4

[Article by R. Rosenthal: "Five Thousand Pounds Sterling, and the Banyas is Ours"]

[Text] The honeymoon between Israel and Jordan revealed a paradoxical truth: The Green Line, perhaps the most stable political term in the stormy chain of events since the Six-Day War, up until the Washington meeting, is not agreed on or decided upon at all. In

today's atmosphere, it appears that it will be easy to reach a suitable compromise on the 'Arava, to return territories to the Jordanians as much as is necessary, and to compromise on others, and not to repeat the Taba farce. As of now, with every periodic clarification on the Syrian horizon, similar questions are sprouting up there, and even more harshly. Even if the most far-fetched principle is accepted—that all territories that were in their possession before the Six-Day War be returned to them—significant and highly important territories will remain to which both sides will lay claim. A real struggle is expected in these discussions on a matter of decisive importance in the negotiations—water. One of the areas of dispute, which has the potential for a serious dispute over both the question of the territories and water is the Jordan's sources, and primarily, the Banyas' sources.

This dispute has already undergone several life cycles. On 22 June 1945, HA'ARETZ describes the Pamias (Banyas' Roman name) waterfall as "one of the pleasant spots of the Hula Valley." And, suddenly, "low-rank institutions came and declared that Pamias was beyond the border of the Land of Israel. Whoever proceeds beyond Sdot Dan is to be arrested and dragged off to Quneitra's prison, where he will be put on trial and fined 25 liras. Perhaps the authorized institutions will finally decided to intervene in this border dispute?" The newspaper editor, Gershom Shoqen, questioned the senior Mandate commander, Mr. M. Scott, and received a detailed and cloudy answer.

Yosi Lev-Ari, age 55, is the director of the Ussishkin House at Kibbutz Dan. He came to the kibbutz from Rehovot a few years before the outbreak of the Six-Day War, and gained experience in the battle over water that took place virtually on the threshold of the kibbutz. The Syrians dominated most of the Jordan's sources, but did not benefit from them. The water of the Hetzbani was fed from various springs, among them the springs of the town of Al-Rami in Lebanon and the springs of Aluzani, adjacent to the village of 'Ajar, and from there, they entered the Jordan. The Banyas sources issued from Syrian territory, and there, the wonderful Banyas waterfall also flowed. But the Banyas, itself, was cut almost arbitrarily, in a straight line, between Syria and Israel. For the entire length of the Golan Heights, springs burst forth in various places, all of them entering into the Jordan. Of the three streams, only the sources of the Dan were in Israeli territory, although the Syrians also had a claim on them. They claim that the border line marking the Dan's sources was drawn in pencil and that, increasing the scale, it was 68 meters thick, and, therefore, it was also possible to haggle for this region. This claim was never accepted, but the Syrian border from before 1967 was only as close as 10 meters to the Dan's sources.

In any case, in 1964, the Syrians began the great diversion operation, with the backing of the Arab League. The goal of the diversion was to exploit the water leaving from Syrian territory for the well-being of the Syrians.

Lev-Ari points out the alignment of the diversion, a path carved in rock that can still be seen today along the mountain slopes that overlook the finger of the Galilee. The alignment of the diversion was intended to catch the Hetzbani's water at a number of points, catching the water of the Dan's sources in reservoirs, connecting to the Banyas sources, essentially drying out the State of Israel. Then, there was no water crisis in Syria, and the goal of the process was political.

In order to make the diversion militarily possible, the Syrians set up the Nuheyla post adjacent to Kibbutz Dan. The young State of Israel stood up at the target of the alignment, set up an opposing commanding ground and rained down artillery fire all along it. At the time, Yisra'el Tal even won the Israel Defense Prize for the development of special shells that he developed for this battle. Each time that the Syrians brought their tools and began carving in the rock, Israeli cannons reacted and the work was stopped. To this day, one can see the alignment sections beginning and ending without a connection between them. Only in the Natur region in the Golan was a canal dug in the diversion alignment, since the area was hidden from Israeli view. One day, Kibbutz Dan sustained 2,500 "fallings." Israeli responded with strong artillery fire and an aircraft attack, and to this day, a burnt Syrian tank remains stuck at Nuheyla. The Syrian diversion alignment remains unused, but, in principle, it can be restored and redeveloped.

Almost every Israeli who has reached the spot on organized trips knows the source of the Banyas. The area has become commercial, the water not as pure and flowing as that of the Dan. But the real pearls of beauty in the region are the springs of al-Uzani, which are the primary water sources of the Hetzbani River, the only water that also flows in the summer. These springs issue from the mountain rocks and the stream winds in a beautiful valley, all of it in Israeli territory, to the foot of the village of 'Ajar. 'Ajar is known to few Israelis, and it is one of a kind. This is the only Syrian village in the territory of the state of Israel that is not Druze. The village inhabitants are 'Alawis, from the dominating sect in Syria. In the distant past, the village belonged to Lebanon, and it was given to Syria in the framework of an attempt to divert the Banyas sources.

After the Six-Day War, the village of 'Ajar was a country in itself for two months. The Syrians lost it in the war, but the Israelis thought, for some reason, that it was not in the captured territory and they did not enter it. The inhabitants of 'Ajar, unfortunately, tried connect themselves to the Lebanese and reached Marj 'Ayun, but the Lebanese rejected them for fear that they would get tangled up with the big Syrian brother and would be accused of benefiting from the fruits of the Israeli war. After two months, the Israelis discovered 'Ajar and the source of the Hetzbani at its feet. Except that 'Ajar has remained a closed world. The 'Alawis cannot marry other Muslims, and under the political circumstances, nor can they marry Syrian 'Alawis. The 1,500 village

inhabitants marry among themselves. Yosi Lev-Ari knows the villagers; a few dozen of them work at Kibbutz Dan. A council of elders runs the village, and it is much more cultivated and developed than most Arab villages inside the Green Line. The courtyards are laden with firewood, and the roads have signs.

What will the picture be after a possible accord with Syria? Yosi Lev-Ari wants peace, but he anticipated trouble. The Syrians of today need much more water than they did in the 1960's. Their populations have grown from four and one-half million to 13 million, and, despite this, water options have been taken from them in other areas, such as the water of the Euphrates and the Tigris, that the Turks have partially blocked for their needs by means of the Ata Turk Dam. The Syrians greatly need water, and there is no reason for them to give up water that leaves from their territory. The State of Israel needs this water just as badly. The supply of all sources of the Jordan entering Israel comes to one-half million cubic meters per year, a quarter of Israeli needs, and Israel is still about to concede water to Jordan and the autonomy. Even if there is a disputed accord, it will be at the mercy of the Syrians. If the territory returns to them, we will remain without water, and Israel, he emphatically states, cannot exist without this water. It is a matter of life and death. Beyond the faith and expectations, it is clear to those who prepared the drawer plans for a Syrian accord that the picture of the situation before the Six-Day War, when Israel used all water sources of the Jordan and defeated the Syrians' attempts at water usage with cannon fire, will not return. There will be a compromise.

The border around 'Ajar was drawn between Syria and Lebanon in the 1960's, but the border around the finger of the Galilee descending to the Jordan was created in the 1920's. Much blood has been spilled around the line that a British man and Frenchman marked, which they advanced at a slow pace for five years, between 1921 and 1926, measuring every stone. The British man was Lieutenant Colonel Newcombe. He was not concerned with the interests of Israel and Zionism, but with those of the British Empire. He wanted there to be as much water as possible in the region of the British Mandate, and it was, thereby, a birthright. Then, there was excess water, but Newcombe envisioned an anticipated shortage in the future. The Frenchman was Lieutenant Colonel Folet, an egotistical man in a blue suit, who took almost no interest in marking the border, but in a reasonable compensation for the French.

In the official report on the committee's work, it was stated that: "The French have a problem of honor and the British have a problem of water." Newcombe understood that the region's water was the source of existence for the Mandate's Palestine, and therefore, he painstakingly aligned the border according to the principle that everywhere there was water it would be, as much as possible, under British ownership. Newcombe and Folet strode, accompanied by aides, police of both sides, and

Senegalese soldiers, and placed white stones all along the border. Everywhere a spring issued forth Newcombe place a stone to its east and included it in the British Mandate.

Thus, the entire Jordan entered the territory of the British Mandate and, later, Israel's territory. Thus, the entire Sea of Galilee entered the Mandate territory, as well as the sources of the Dan. Newcombe, of course, wanted the sources of the Hetzbani and the Banyas under British control, except that, here, he came to a stumblingblock—the Quneitra-Beirut road went through the region and cut between the source of the Dan and the sources of the Hetzbani and Banyas. It was agreed that transportation axes would not be cut, and Newcombe sought 5,000 pounds sterling to finance the paving of a road to circumvent Banyas. The British did not want to pay the money. It did not appear important enough to them. The Zionist Histadrut people very much wanted to give it, but did not succeed in mobilizing the funds. Newcombe conceded, and thus the Banyas source was lost to the British Mandate—and, later, to the State of Israel of the Green Line.

Newcombe used to say that the Banyas was his greatest failure in his border marking expedition. David Lloyd-George, then British prime minister, told Newcombe: "I do not understand a lot about Palestine, but give it to me from Dan to Be'ersheva". Banyas was then considered Biblical Dan, and Newcombe's sense of failure was even more acute.

The international border, as aligned by Newcombe and Folet, does not reflect the situation as it was in actuality before the Six-Day War, because of the scattered territories, territories over which there was no decision in the cease-fire agreements. More than a few scattered territories, along the entire length of the border, were actively occupied by the Syrians. One of them is the Banyas Heights, which looks over the canyon into which the Banyas flows. The Syrian control became stronger following the conquest of Tel 'Azaziat, which overlooks the Banyas Heights. The Israelis neglected the region, and the Syrians stationed the military there. A few times, they entered Kibbutz Dan's sheep-grazing territory, and the Syrians took their flocks. This is how Uri Eylan (who, in the end committed suicide in a Syrian prison) was captured: With his friends, he went on an expedition to connect to Syrian telephone lines that were placed in the scattered region. Researcher Brigadier General (Res.) Arye Shelo recently published revelations regarding failed attempts that were made in the early 1950's to divide the dispersed territories and clearly determine the border.

After the Six-Day War, he went up to the ground in the region of Kibbutz Senir. There were claims that he was in Syrian territory, and the Kibbutz Ha'artzi held fiery debates on the matter. South of this, there are territories of similar stature, containing the majority of the mouth of the Jordan, that the Syrians actively dominated. When

there are negotiations between Israel and the Syrians, the Syrians are likely to present claims over the dispersed territories that they actively dominated.

The region of the Banyas preserve is humming with tourists, for some reason, mostly religious. An old, orthodox woman appears standing above the river, asking if there is water below.

It is hard to see the river. Ever since the canyon passed into Israeli hands, a significant change has occurred. Before the Six-Day War, it was possible to see the wonderful waterfall from afar, since the Syrians used to cut down all of the trees that grew in the wadi for their needs. The Israelis left the trees and, today, in order to look into the water, one must get close and pass through a path of thickets. I do not know which is better, says Yosi Lev-Ari, but I miss the wonderful view of the exposed waterfall.

LEBANON

Interior Minister: Cultivation of Cannabis Ended

94WD0527Z Damascus AL-BA'TH in Arabic 11 Jul 94
p 3

[Interview with Interior Minister Bisharah Mirhij by editor M. Kh. in Beirut; date not given: "Cultivation of Cannabis Has Ended in Lebanon, Help of Syrian Arab Army in al-Biq'a' Has Made the Impossible Possible"—first three paragraphs are AL-BA'TH introduction]

[Text] When we entered the office of Lebanese Interior Minister Bisharah Mirhij, we were surprised by two things we had not expected. First, the minister remains at work in his office until 1900. When he excused himself from our interview at 1330 that day, he did not do so because his office hours were over.

Second, the minister expressed unusual joy when he learned that our interview with him would deal with Lebanon's campaign against drug cultivation on its territory and its eradication of cannabis fields with the help of Syrian forces active in Lebanon and that the interview would not center on domestic and Arab politics.

This made us happy for many reasons closely linked to the return of health to Lebanon, which we wish, and to the effectiveness of the Syria and Lebanon page in AL-BA'TH. We said to the minister:

[AL-BA'TH] From time to time we read biased reports about Lebanon's role in growing or selling drugs. Where do some international organizations get such false figures? Why do they insist on misleading and slandering?

[Mirhij] The EC ambassadors in Lebanon recently made a field tour of the al-Biq'a' plain. Mr. Frei, the group's representative, visited me and thanked me on behalf of the foreign ambassadors in Lebanon for the resolute measures that the Lebanese Government has taken in cooperation with the Syrian Arab Army. These measures

have led to almost complete suppression of the growing, selling, and exporting of drugs.

This field testimony, of which we are proud, only confirms that some international or state organizations are engaged in preparing reports not based on the facts. Their purpose is to distort Lebanon's accomplishments and harm the Syrian-Lebanese relationship. These reports, with the lies they contain, not only refute themselves by themselves, but are refuted by reality and the reports of foreign ambassadors.

In this context, I should like to point out that one of these organizations recently printed that Lebanon produces 65,000 tons of hashish. This is utterly ridiculous. If all Lebanon were planted in cannabis, it could not produce this amount.

Representatives of the International Narcotics Monitoring Agency recently made field visits and confirmed that Lebanon has totally and irrevocably eliminated the cultivation of narcotics. Lebanese soil no longer produces cannabis or any crop that could enter the drug trade.

[AL-BA'TH] When did this rigorous campaign against the cultivation, selling, and smuggling of drugs begin? What is happening with it, now that drug cultivation has been totally eliminated?

[Mirhij] The campaign began in 1992, when 5,680 hectares were eradicated. I have continued what was begun in the previous ministry. We successfully stopped smuggling from the airport or harbor. We destroyed crops, raided distribution warehouses, and arrested smugglers. There is no new production now. Perhaps there are some "stocks"—quantities in storage—but we will confiscate them in the future.

The drugs issue was the first issue I dealt with as interior minister. This is because many European countries focus on Lebanon's position in relation to drugs. They want Lebanon to free itself from this plague, so that they can establish broader relations with Lebanon.

We also discovered that many of our young people had been affected by drug cultivation, selling, or use. We therefore turned to a broad campaign. We encouraged societies to help addicts overcome their dangerous sickness. I can say that we were possessed by a multi-faceted desire to combat drugs. Some of the main points were:

First, to safeguard future generations.

Second, to eliminate the state of addiction that sometimes becomes an entry to crime, for the addict can be bought by Zionist organizations.

Third, our concern was to restore Lebanon's good reputation, which was marred during the time of the war. Serious work was needed to restore the good name of the community and the state in cooperation with our Syrian brothers, who made available all their resources to help us achieve our noble goals.

The Syrian Arab Army helped us greatly in protecting eradication, raiding, and prosecution operations. Mayors of towns in the al-Biqa' plain were summoned and asked to cooperate fully in combatting drugs. The poppy plant was eradicated in the entire al-Biqa'.

For example, in January 1992, 7,510 kg of stored hashish were seized.

In 1994, the antinarcotics agencies were no longer encountering any green materials in the quantities seized. This is conclusive evidence that the cultivation of drugs has ended in Lebanon.

[AL-BA'TH] What alternative has been provided to farmers on the lands that used to grow cannabis?

[Mirhij] We agreed with the United Nations to find alternative crops. The European countries promised to support this program and budgeted \$3.5 million for it.

Germany contributed to increasing the amount by aiding the armed forces with vehicles.

The Lebanese Ministry of Agriculture now is in charge of the program. A UN representative supervises its implementation.

The goal of the program is not limited to finding alternative crops. It is also trying to improve the agricultural infrastructure by such things as digging irrigation wells, extending roads, building schools and clinics, and providing markets for the new crops at good prices. The program is open to development and improvement. We as a government are also contributing money to the program. There is close cooperation between the ministries of agriculture and interior in this field. The International Drug Monitoring Organization has a permanent representative in the administration of the project.

[AL-BA'TH] Do you think United Nations help is sufficient and can accomplish the goals desired from this program?

[Mirhij] I think the aid that the United Nations is giving is limited and inadequate for the purpose. We are therefore holding talks with representatives of the European countries. We are stressing to them the need to help Lebanon work through the situation, because the problem is international and must be combatted internationally. We think that the international community must shoulder its responsibilities.

We are eager to carry out our responsibilities as fully as possible.

We signed the agreement this February. We hope that the United Nations will increase its assistance and that the European countries will strengthen their role so that together we can provide a real alternative so that the Lebanese farmer can live in dignity.

In this context, I think that Syrian-Lebanese economic and social cooperation can create significant development in this area. One of the clearest examples of this is

the joint irrigation project at the sources of the al-'Asi River. Implementation of the project will make it possible to irrigate large areas of Lebanese territory, providing Lebanese farmers with the possibility of good, stable agricultural production.

[AL-BA'TH] People say that the penalties normally imposed on drug traffickers play a decisive role in decreasing this pernicious trade. Is the Lebanese Government trying to make the penalties on drug growers, dealers, and users more severe?

[Mirhij] In the Council of Arab Interior Ministers, Lebanon supported the death penalty for drug dealers, although Lebanese law considers drug trading a felony punishable by imprisonment for three years to life. However, there is nothing to prevent the passage of new laws in Lebanon in step with Arab laws, extending to the death penalty. This, however, will require changing the criminal code. There is serious thought in this direction in Lebanon.

[AL-BA'TH] Death penalties exist in the Lebanese criminal code. What is new about them? We have read about a change that has allowed the execution of a number of criminals to date.

[Mirhij] In view of the conditions prevailing after the war, the Lebanese government deemed it necessary to pass legislation mandating the death penalty for anyone who murders with intent or premeditation. This was done to root out crime and protect the community from the aftereffects of the war or the byproducts of bad social conditions. After extensive study, the government approved the law that the Justice Ministry submitted. It mandates the death penalty for anyone who murders with intent. Section 549 of the Criminal Code specifies the death penalty for premeditated murder. This law was recently amended. Parliament approved the change and passed a law providing the death penalty for the murderer who commits his crime with intent.

[AL-BA'TH] Would you clarify the difference between premeditated and intentional murder?

[Mirhij] The criminal who commits his crime with intent need not have prepared for it.

Thus we have tightened the grip on criminals. This provision is now in effect.

[AL-BA'TH] A number of death sentences have recently taken place in Lebanon. Was this done on the basis of the new law?

[Mirhij] The death sentences recently executed upon a number of murderers in Lebanon took place under the old law, but in the atmosphere of the new law.

While we are talking about the execution of the death penalty against murderers in Lebanon, let me make it clear that we view President al-Asad's historic initiative with appreciation and respect. He ordered that two

Syrian soldiers who participated with Lebanese murderers in the B'abda crime should be tried in Lebanese courts and that the Lebanese sentences should be carried out on them even though one of the Lebanese murderers fled to Belgium and still has not been extradited to Lebanese justice. President al-Asad's initiative created broad satisfaction among Lebanese. It silenced some of the circles that were casting doubt on the credibility of the relationship between the two countries. It proved the concern of Syria and of President al-Asad for the security of Lebanon, the protection of the institutions of the Lebanese state, and the execution of the sentence of the court.

The death penalty was executed against the two Syrian soldiers who participated with two Lebanese in killing two jeweler brothers for the purpose of robbery.

The death penalty was also executed against the murderer of a young girl and a drug smuggler who murdered a number of policemen. Thus, three executions have been carried out. This proves the Lebanese Government's determination to protect the nation's security by imposing security and order within the country and fully enforcing the provisions of the law. It also proves the government's concern about pan-Arab and strategic security through the defense treaty with Syria and through adherence to the policy of resistance and to the liberation of territory from the Zionist occupier.

SYRIA

Chief of Staff Hikmat al-Shihabi Interviewed

94AA0102A Damascus AL-BA'TH in Arabic
31 Jul 94 p 3

[Interview with Syrian Army and Armed Forces Chief of Staff General Hikmat al-Shihabi on 1 August; place not given: "General al-Shihabi to AL-BA'TH: We Put Leader al-Asad's Instructions Before Our Eyes as Lantern Guiding Us, and We Work Under His Leadership for Good of Our Nation and People"—first three paragraphs are AL-BA'TH introduction]

[Text] Army and Armed Forces Chief of Staff General Hikmat al-Shihabi has emphasized that our valiant army embodies the nation's will to develop its inner strength and to rely on its sons to defend its future capably.

His excellency the general said: "Our Armed Forces have assimilated the values of martyrdom and have used them as their main instrument to make freedom. The spirit of martyrdom and sacrifice has risen in the fighter's mind and has liberated him from the residues of fear and hesitation. Thus, the course and high ideals of Hafiz al-Asad, the great leader, have produced their fruit in creating the daring man, the ideologically and technologically valiant fighter, and the model of firmness, death defiance, vigor, and sacrifice."

In his interview with AL-BA'TH on 1 August, the anniversary of the foundation of our valiant armed forces, Gen. Hikmat al-Shihabi added, "Since the dawn of the glorious corrective movement, efforts have been made to develop our Armed Forces' capabilities on scientific bases and to equip them with the latest weapons industry inventions. This has been coupled with the serious emphasis placed on creating the fighter who is committed to his nation's causes and who believes in the fairness and inevitable triumph of these causes."

Following is the text of AL-BA'TH's questions and of the answers of his excellency the Army and Armed Forces chief of staff.

[AL-BA'TH] The first of August is a bright national way station in Syria's modern history and a qualitative starting point in founding the Arab Syrian Army, the nation's shield and its sharpest weapon in confrontations. There is no doubt that this anniversary evokes abundant emotions and bright memories connected with the history and advances of our armed forces.

On this occasion, we would like you to point out to us some of the meanings and assumptions of the advancement of our forces, especially since the glorious correction path was established and since the immortal confrontation in the October war.

People's Elite

[al-Shihabi] To begin, we must restate that our Arab Syrian Army is the best of our people and the institution where our people's new vanguards and young generations meet to perform the sacred national and pan-Arab duty. Since the Army came into existence, its creation was coupled with the glorious evacuation which confirmed its birth at the dawn of independence. This army is also the embodiment of the nation's will to create its intrinsic power and to rely on its sons to defend its future capably.

Our army was born in a difficult and critical climate that was mixed with the evident signs of the creation of the Zionist entity and emergence of the dangers of separation of the Arab East from Arab Africa. The climate of constant confrontations played its role in entrenching in the official and popular awareness the dangers and the great need to supply the army with qualified elements and with the appropriate weapons.

Along this difficult track, the Arab Syrian Army completed building its weapons, securing its equipment, and developing its cadres. In the Arab East, this army became the main base for defending the nation and for embodying its capabilities and its determination to control its future. Today, it is, as it has always been, the true base and the primary guarantee for the homeland's safety and the effective reason for reassurance and confidence in the hearts of the citizens.

As Leader President Hafiz al-Asad has asserted on similar occasions, the sun of 1 August spreads rays of confidence on our present and our future; it renews in our souls warm faith in the aspired future; and it motivates us to give and sacrifice even more and to redouble the efforts to defend our Arab nation's causes and rights.

Values of Martyrdom

On the basis of the army's pan-Arab creed and of the firm image of the greater homeland that is entrenched in the conscience of all of the army's sons, this army's confident presence has had its influence and impact at the pan-Arab level. This army has been the object of the Arab masses' respect from the Gulf to the ocean, and it has always taken the courageous initiative and the decisive positions to repel aggression, to bury the expansionist tendencies, and to protect the homeland's soil.

There is not enough space to recount the most significant military accomplishments made along this path. They are so well known so there is no need to recall them to the memory, and they have had too great an impact on our modern history to be absent from the mind. They are tantamount to a series of honorable heroic actions that have proved that the Arab soil is a sacred trust in the conscience and in the firm belief of the officers, noncommissioned officers, and soldiers of our Armed Forces.

Our army has assimilated the values of martyrdom and has turned them into its primary tool for making freedom and into a principle ingrained in the fighter's conscience—a principle with which he has armed himself in all his confrontations and for which he has paid a dear price in the arena of honor, guided by the course drafted by the Leader in his famous words about the martyr's place with God and man. The spirit of martyrdom and sacrifice has risen in the fighter's mind, thus liberating him from the waste of fear and hesitation. Many are the examples in our army's history of the effect of this concept in the honorable outcome of confrontations and challenges.

Leader al-Asad's Path

Thus, the great leader Hafiz al-Asad's path and his sublime ideals have succeeded in developing the daring citizen and the ideologically and technologically brave fighter who is a model of firmness, death defiance, vigor, and martyrdom.

These are some features of our Arab Syrian Army to which we have the honor of belonging and of whose national and pan-Arab credit we boast. We are proud of its ability to translate the instructions of our redeemed leader and to assimilate the leader's path, modes of conduct, and generous giving.

[AL-BA'TH] The Arab Syrian Army's procession toward strength and impregnability and toward securing the requirements of confrontation abounds with tiring

efforts and difficult phases. Can we recall some of the way stations of this procession of preparing and developing the heroic armed forces?

[Al-Shihabi] There isn't enough space to give this subject even some of the attention it deserves. The history of this army's training, armament, and integration and of its dealing with the technology of the world of weapons and wars is truly a history abounding with great efforts, capabilities, and accomplishments which have been impossible to highlight.

Will for Confrontation

From the outset, our army possessed the will and the determination for confrontation. Its aspirations to absorb the capabilities of modern weapons and to deal with them capably at the tactical and technical levels have grown. The leadership, inspired by the popular enthusiasm to sacrifice and to give, hasn't hesitated to meet the requirements and dictates of this kind of modernization and development which have always been given priority to ensure that our armed forces rise to the level needed for the fateful tasks entrusted to them.

Since the dawn of the glorious corrective movement, efforts have been made to develop our Armed Forces' capabilities on scientific bases and to supply them with the latest inventions of the weapons industry. This effort has been coupled with the serious emphasis placed on developing a fighter who is committed to his nation's causes and who believes in their justness and inevitable triumph because we believe that man is the decisive element in any battle and that a lot depends on his courage, broad knowledge, and the adequacy of his experience. Our various army units have developed their colleges and training institutes.

I am pleased and proud of the standard of the Arab Syrian fighter, and I highly appreciate his adherence to the values of the national and pan-Arab struggle. It is no secret that our armed forces are among the best in field experience and in the use of combat instruments. We will not stop bolstering the army's capability and experience and diversifying its instruments so it will remain in the highest state of preparedness and best performance. We will carry on in this regard.

[AL-BA'TH] Your excellency, what is your evaluation of the situation in Lebanon in light of the constant improvement there and of the fraternal stance that the Arab Syrian Army has taken toward the Lebanese brothers throughout their crisis?

[Al-Shihabi] Nobody can deny that the Lebanese situation is moving from good to better and that, as fast as the legitimate government is entrenched and Lebanese national concord is bolstered, so will the traces of the crisis disappear and the Lebanese brothers turn over the leaf of the ordeal. We in Syria, and our armed forces in particular, haven't held back anything that can be

offered to help the brothers in Lebanon reach the shore of safety and recovery. President Hafiz al-Asad has constantly asserted that our slogan is that Syria will continue to stand by Lebanon and help it until it recovers from its crisis, and we embrace this slogan in word and deed. This is why Syria and its armed forces have, out of their sense of their fraternal and pan-Arab duty, shouldered immense burdens to rescue Lebanon, to save it from the talons of the civil war, and to strengthen its capabilities and abilities so it can eliminate the hateful occupation, liberate its south, protect its soil, preserve its water, and be a support for Syria and the Arab nation.

We say with utter honor and pride that President Hafiz al-Asad's efforts vis-a-vis the Lebanese crisis have borne fruit and have lifted the fraternal Lebanon from the inferno of sedition, internecine war, partition, and submission to the Israeli domination. The successful Syrian effort to protect Lebanon and to save it from division and fragmentation has become an example cited in fraternal Arab relations. We have preserved Lebanon's independence and have strengthened the course of the Syrian-Lebanese relations by concluding the fraternal and cooperation treaty which is being actually implemented in the economic, cultural, tourism, and educational fields. To put it briefly, we in Syria are totally pleased with our effort and with what we have accomplished with the brothers in Lebanon to date.

[AL-BA'TH] What is your opinion of the peace process that has been going on for nearly three years, and what are the possibilities expected for the region's future?

[Al-Shihabi] It is no secret that the peace process wouldn't have come into existence and moved forward if it hadn't been for Syria's approval. It has become known that Syria opened the door for this process, provided the opportunity for initiating the dialogue, and proved its true and definite desire for the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the region based on UN resolutions, and especially on the implementation of Resolutions 242 and 338 and the principle of land for peace. This has been Syria's declared position since the end of the October War.

When the peace process was launched at the Madrid conference and continued in the Washington talks, Syria expressed utter eagerness and positivism for its success. But what happened is that Israel's rulers began to repeatedly place obstacles in front of this process. They didn't declare their acceptance of the agreed bases and principles. They procrastinated; they drowned the peace talks in superficialities; and they raised subsidiary issues totally unrelated to the crux of the peace process and to its predetermined objective.

Moreover, Syria's keenness on aborting Israel's opportunity to foil the peace process motivated Syria to present its clearly-defined vision in a paper submitted to the sixth round of Washington peace talks. The American side considered this paper extremely significant, but

Israel persisted in its intransigence and obstructionism. When President al-Asad declared at the Geneva summit with President Bill Clinton that Syria was serious and keen on continuation of the peace process until it achieves its predetermined objective, namely a just and lasting peace, Israel's rulers began to maneuver and impede progress. They turned their backs to the peace process when they took the Palestinian side separately and concluded with it a secret deal in Oslo and when they persisted in the method of separation, partial deals, and independent solutions. Thus, they refuted the main bases of the peace process, namely comprehensive solutions, and resorted to maneuvering and to emptying the comprehensive settlement of its meaning.

We Will not Cede a Single Grain of Our National Soil

But despite all of the Israeli rulers' methods of obstruction and maneuvering, Syria clings to its line of action for a just and lasting peace. It will not give Israel's rulers the opportunity to embarrass it or to oust it from this process. But whatever the circumstances, Syria will never be prepared to accept what is in conflict with the bases of the peace process, and it will not be prepared to swerve from the word and spirit of the Madrid formula. Moreover, Syria will not cede a single grain of its national soil or any of its rights. Syria never negotiates from a weak position. It proceeds in its work for a just and lasting peace from a real position of strength, and it possesses a strong argument for its legitimate demands. Syria's position is solid and its policy is clear and supported by its people, its domestic front, the Arab nation's masses, and the world public. In its strong position, Syria relies on the fact that its policy serves the people's national and pan-Arab rights and the fact that its people are prepared to defend their rights and their land with all that they possess. Therefore, Syria will not squander a single grain of the soil of the Arab territories which Israel occupied with its war of aggression in 1967, and it will not back down in the face of the ultimatums and threats voiced by the Israeli rulers from time to time. Moreover, there is no fear of the talk of increased armament in the Zionist entity.

Finally, there is nothing to date to call for optimism regarding the presence of conditions for a just and comprehensive peace. The Israeli tunnel, which abounds with mines facing the peace process, continues to impede any progress in this process, as it continues to impede creation of the conditions the process requires. But we have worked and we continue to work for a just and comprehensive peace, and we cling to this course with confidence and strength.

[AL-BA'TH] Your excellency, do you have a word you wish to address to your brothers and sons in the armed forces on this honorable occasion?

We Will Continue To Be the Country's Shield

[Al-Shihabi] With unqualified honor and pride, I address my brothers and sons the officers, noncommissioned

officers, and soldiers of our brave armed forces on this honorable occasion and precious anniversary by saying that we all put the instructions of President Hafiz al-Asad, our nation's leader, before our eyes as a lantern guiding us, and we always work under his wise and courageous leadership for the good of our nation and people, for the elevation of our homeland, and for the strength and impregnability of our army. I appeal to our armed forces to remain today and tomorrow as they have been in the past: the homeland's shield and the nation's armor in the face of all challenges.

I tell my brothers and sons in the armed forces: redouble your efforts in training, in preparing, and in caring for your weapon. Sweat in training and preparation saves blood in confrontation arenas. Let your effort and your interest be focused on mastering your weapon and on utilizing it to the fullest. We possess as much capability of defending our nation and people and rejecting the tyrannical enemy's dictates and conditions as you are prepared and trained.

TUNISIA

Absence of Intellectual Debate Criticized

94AF0248A Tunis *REALITES* in French 30 Jun 94
pp 12-13

[Article by Ibrahim Sadok: "Headaches of Tunisian 'Eggheads'; first paragraph is *REALITES* introduction]

[Text] Have they simply disappeared, bag and baggage? So little is heard from "Homo intellectus" these days, one has to wonder. What is certain, at all events, is that the country's "eggheads" are unhappy with their current situation. *REALITES* investigates the reasons for the malaise.

The "Universe," a small bar on Avenue Habib Bourguiba, valiantly continues as one of the last vestiges of a "bygone" age, a place where one could find what people used to call "the downtown".... Nowadays, fewer and fewer intellectuals frequent the boulevard, except to purchase a newspaper.

External Signs

This is but one of many signs of malaise, according to the intellectuals, who are ready as always to express an opinion at the drop of a hat. Nowadays, ideas are rarely debated in newspapers or coffee houses. Indeed, coffee houses today are places to socialize more than anything else, places for the few who socialize outside their workplace.

Another sign is the decline of "groups." In the past, certain "groups" were always hanging out together. Small groups, as few as three or four, and they had their own meeting place, their special rendezvous, even their own table at some downtown bars and restaurants. More

and more today, the "eggheads" have dispersed. They no longer socialize as a group, or they've gone elsewhere.

Our investigation indicates the absence of debate per se is the result of increasing "individualism." This can be seen by looking at the composition of the so-called intellectual groups several years ago. They used to include artists of every kind, academics, teachers, other members of the liberal professions, etc. Their heterogeneity fueled debate, first of all within the group itself but also between different groups. Issues were taken up in every arena—journalistic polemics, books, petitions...

In the university, the heart of the intellectuals' microcosm, we see new behavior patterns that divide them into four distinct clusters.

A small, rebellious cluster that aggressively distinguishes itself by nonconformity at every level—internally vis-a-vis the university administration, the mandarins, and the "careerist" schemers; externally by its attention to trends and problems in society as a whole. These are the intellectuals who participate in the few political or intellectual demonstrations we see nowadays, most obviously in the area of human rights.

A second cluster, also fairly small, comprises the "political" intellectuals. Those who belong to a pro-government or opposition political party are mostly preoccupied with their "militancy" and the dividends they will reap from it. A number of academics have risen to leadership positions in the RCD [Democratic Constitutional Rally] or opposition, and devote themselves heart and soul to this activity.

The third cluster, constantly growing and increasingly worrisome, consists of what might be called "careerists." Politically inactive or unconcerned, these intellectuals are functionaries who do only what the university tells them. Otherwise, they disappear.

There is a fourth and final cluster, composed of notorious "individualists" who have chosen to disengage, devote themselves to other things—family, agriculture, even a totally different occupation. They are mostly interested in the latest news on the automobile market, new weekend getaway spots, and travel abroad.

The same broad divisions can also be found beyond the groves of academe. But other indicators of malaise are plain for anyone to see. First of all, the obvious decline in intellectual productivity, as measured by the number of new creative or analytical titles appearing in bookstores. Second, the decline in the traditional political commitment of intellectuals on issues of concern to society as a whole, especially significant since in most societies it is intellectuals who formulate the issues of the day. What most distinguishes the intelligentsia, obviously, is thought. Not only are intellectuals always ready, as noted above, to bring their analytical skills to bear—they also are best positioned to become aware of problems. But wherever you raise the question of intellectuals and their

role in today's world, you hear the same thing: There is growing malaise, and its causes are multiple.

Causes of Malaise

The fall of communism changed things in unexpected ways!

The Berlin wall quickly became a new "wailing wall" for some. In fact, the end of "ideology" is described by many as one of the basic reasons for the silence of the intellectuals. However, in the West, which was most directly affected by the event, what we saw was not so much a "withdrawal" of intellectuals as a "repositioning" that began long before Mr. Gorbachev's "perestroika." But other, more pertinent reasons were cited by our interlocutors. One line of analysis has it that the end of ideology coincided with the emergence on the Tunisian political scene of a democracy marked by strong consensus on certain broad principles. Consensual democracy, according to this analysis, leaves little space for diversity, which even becomes suspect.

Another line of analysis indicta our whole era as too "image oriented," condemned to accommodate to the tyranny of television. One might note, in this regard, the increasing prevalence of what might be called "ready-made opinions." Caught between the pervasive influence of television celebrities molding tastes and concerns, and the rise of a species of cultural clientism that inundates the market with productions of doubtful quality, the "self-respecting" intellectual prefers to bury himself in the university library...

The spirit of the age is also criticized on other grounds. The 1980's and 1990's, according to some lines of analysis, have witnessed the triumph of market economics...and consumption. The intellectual is a consumer himself, generally the head of a family. And a consumer with more sophisticated appetites than most compatriots, for he travels, or has travelled, and has been exposed to other societies (especially in the West). So he spends his hours scheming to meet his own needs and those of his family...which leaves him little free time for anything but watching television...like everybody else.

Headache?

Thus, among intellectuals of all sorts, we see the creeping spread of a "pessimism" that might be called "positive." Just now it is trendy, when anyone asks a profound question, to respond by saying, "Who cares?" The witty riposte of the day, when asked "How is it going?", is "It's not going anywhere, but it still runs." How thinly this malaise is masked! Whenever a conference or political event brings intellectuals together, what's most interesting are the parallel discussions that take place on the margins of the main event but generally have nothing to do with the latter. These conversations generally consist of people trading observations on various subjects...and getting no response, which is just what one would expect, since the malady is...all in their heads.

REGIONAL AFFAIRS

Iranian Relationship With South Asia Analyzed

94AS0419C Jalandhar PUNJAB KESARI in Hindi
4 Aug 94 p 4

[Article by Said Naqvi: "Can India Trust Iran to Not Back Pakistan?"]

[Text] As Indo-Pakistan relations deteriorate, Indo-Iran relations will grow in important ways. The Prime Minister, Foreign Minister Dinesh Singh, Foreign Minister of State Shri Raghunandan Lal Bhatia and even Foreign Secretary K. Srinivasan (all these have traveled to Tehran in the past few months and have talked to senior Iran leaders) also have the same overall opinion, but this line of thought has not reached the lower levels of administration.

The Prime Minister considers important the medieval cultural relations between the two nations, which include the ancient Aryan connection and subsequent Islamic cultural and other connections between India and Iran. The connection between Iran and the Aryans can be better understood from the deceased ex-Shah's title "Arya Mehar" (light of the Aryans). However improved, relations with Iran entail the risk that this could create unnecessary misunderstandings in the West with respect to India. This may happen especially due to Islamic fundamentalism and other suspected dangers connected with it.

After all Persian speaking Tajiks are spreading fundamentalism in Tajikistan. This may well spread to the Farghana valley, considered an important area of mid-Asia. Will the Russian leadership not be worried on account of this and would Russian leaders not have discussed this with the Prime Minister during his recent visit to Moscow?

Equations are not always straightforward or simple in international matters. These issues are not like a straight line. If we consider [relations with] the Iranians a part of our strategy to oppose the aggressive policy adopted by Pakistan against India in Kashmir, then the Iranians can use their influence in the organization of Islamic nations when the need arises, but for this it will be necessary that they do not allow their Islamic identification to impede this.

But this could also generate a contrary notion in this forum of Islamic nations regarding Iran's influence in Kashmir valley, and this we could never accept. Therefore this game of diplomacy can only be played on the basis of indications and conjecture. This may also mean that it is not necessary that whatever is being said is implied literally - the question is how one can establish all this. There is free press everywhere. Nothing even of trifling importance can escape their eyes. Let us say Kashmir's Shia leader Maulana Ansari visits Tehran (where his younger brother is Ayatollah Montazari's physician in Krom)- a local Jammu reporter will print

the news of his Tehran visit and many issues with respect to Iran could be blown out of proportion.

In this situation why would Iran expose itself by taking a step on our behalf, and why would it allow suspicion against itself to grow in Pakistan? They have rather good relations with Pakistan. In this situation why would they make a mistake?

Tehran will not want anything to hinder its relations of Islamic brotherhood with Pakistan. It will also want to maintain its image of being in favor of protecting the interests of Pakistan's [25 percent of total] Shia population - for this it will certainly have to maintain harmony with Pakistan. It will also have to maintain harmony with Pakistan on the question of what must be done with the ruinous situation in Afghanistan. Besides, Iran has a significant border with Pakistan. A different situation between them is that Iran is a completely Shia nation, whereas Pakistan is [majority] Sunni. Both have mutually competitive interests in Afghanistan and mid-Asian republics. Pakistan has unusually close relations with Saudi Arabia and also has close relations with the American military headquarters, the Pentagon. From Tehran's viewpoint, these are negative aspects in the path of its friendship with Pakistan.

In view of this background, are Tehran's Islamic relations with Pakistan comparatively artificial or a part of its strategy, and are its relations with India much more important from a cultural and military viewpoint? This is a question or idea that must be pondered upon.

You may remember that a similar idea was also a subject of discussion in some parts of Washington a long time ago. You may remember that when Jimmy Carter became President, his national security advisor, Brezinski had then created a plan of the world that was somewhat different from Kissinger's triangular model and the Pentagon's balance of power model. Brezinski had created a plan and a model of "regionally influential nations."

Actually that plan and model had been created according to the situation that was then extant. At that time the Shah was in power in Iran, Dawood in Afghanistan, Zia-ul-Haq in Pakistan, Morarji Desai in India, and J.R. Jayawardene in Sri Lanka. All these leaders were inclined towards America in their own ways.

In this plan, Iran's copious oil wealth and India's educated manpower and other factors were combined, and in this way it was imagined that if these two countries would cooperate the entire region would prosper.

This entire scheme fell through due to the arrival of the Soviet Union in Afghanistan, the fall of Iran's Shah and the succeeding revolution. America's rapid deployment force had to retreat. Later it surfaced in the form of "Centcom." In addition, the fall of the Soviet Union and the successful "Desert Storm" or Gulf war against Iraq unexpectedly changed the world situation in a big way.

But the relations between the two geographical areas Iran and India remained sound as before even though Iran's economic situation deteriorated and India's economy improved. These are conditions where both nations are trying to expand relations with each other. We need Iran's support in the organization of Islamic nations, because the sole topic of Pakistan's foreign policy is to obtain passage of a harsh proposal against India regarding Kashmir, and Iran can defeat any such contrivance due to its influence there. In any case if we put our house in order in Kashmir, we can turn the tables on Pakistan with a sound thrashing.

Iran needs us today for the same reasons for which the Shah of Iran wanted to build close relations with India in 1970. It should not be a matter of surprise that Iran is seeking investment assistance to build a gas pipeline for India through Pakistan, as well as for other areas. In addition, Iran is also seeking investment in joint projects.

In brief, the game is going on in the mids of various stratagems. Tehran accuses the West of all kinds of things. It criticizes the West, and its voice is heard among the people of those Arab countries whose governments are inclined towards the West. Why is attention paid to Tehran? Bombings occurred in Lebanon and Muslim genocide went on in Bosnia while West-inclined Muslim countries watched helplessly, or at best appealed to America to do something about peace in Bosnia and West Asia. This is the reason why America's role in the West Asia peace process is still important. The process of peace in West Asia cannot stop now, therefore America can now take the credit for this.

Once peace is established in the Middle East and America is seen to act appropriately in Bosnia, the anti-America tones in Iran's voice will slowly disappear. Then perhaps Tehran can also claim that it was the result of its pressure that America and its allies were not able to obtain a toehold in West Asia, and this is why peace has come to West Asia.

When West-inclined Arabs fearfully run towards Saudi Arabia, Riyadh spends tens of millions of dollars building mosques, Islamic radio stations and schools in countries like Egypt, and the result of this strange political game is that the more Iran opposes the West, the more Saudi Arabia and its allied West-inclined countries spend on the promotion of fundamentalism. This shows how fearful Saudi Arabia is of losing the sway of its leadership in the Muslim world - the kind of competition with Iran that it is forced to engage in shows that it is quite terrified.

The situation is that when New Delhi's South Block sent four separate representative panels to the capitals of Muslim countries to give them clear and correct information about India's position on Kashmir, Saudi Arabia's capital Riyadh did not show any interest in receiving any such representative panel. On the other hand, South Block did not say a word about this either.

INDIA

Afghan Mercenaries Killed in Kashmir

94AS0439A Madras *THE HINDU* in English 18 Jul 94 p 13

[Article: "Five Afghans Killed in J & K"]

[Text] Srinagar, July 17.—Five more foreign mercenaries, mostly Afghan Mujahidins, were killed since today morning, raising the number of mercenaries killed in the State since January 1 this year, to 145.

Three of these foreign mercenaries were killed in Dras, along Ladakh's border, in an encounter with security forces, while trying to enter the Indian side under cover of darkness. Two other mercenaries were killed during the search and combing operations by the Army in the Paddar area of Doda district, according to defence authorities.

So far, 194 mercenaries had been killed and 140 arrested, the authorities said adding that the bulk of the mercenaries killed were Afghans, Pakistanis or PoK nationals. Of the 194 killed, 87 were Pakistanis or PoK nationals and 86 were Afghans. The others include Sudanese, Egyptians, Yemenese and few from Bangladesh and Bahrain. Official sources put the number of foreign mercenaries killed since January at 51.

Many arrested mercenaries confessed to have committed rapes and other excesses. Many said that they were taken for a ride by Pakistan's call for "Jehad" in Kashmir. Pakistan had told them that Muslims were suffering in Kashmir, but on reaching there they said, they had found that Muslims enjoyed more freedom than elsewhere.

Ten Killed

Ten persons were killed and two abducted while 17 militants of different outfits were captured along with arms and ammunition by the security forces since last evening.

An official spokesman told reporters the body of a sadhu was recovered from Anantnag bus stand in south Kashmir today. The victim, yet to be identified, is suspected to have been done to death by militants.

Pro-Pakistan militant outfits have asked the officers connected with arrangements for the annual pilgrimage to Amarnath not to do so in view of continued presence of security forces around Hazratbal shrine.

Militants shot dead Mr. Shyam Lal, police inspector, outside the district police lines in Anantnag on July 15, accusing him of making security arrangements for pilgrims.

Pakistan Harassment of Indian Diplomats Documented

94AS0429A Bombay *THE TIMES OF INDIA* in English 23 Jul 94 p 1

[Article by Sagarika Ghose: "ISI Harassment Exposed in Government List"; names as published]

[Text] The Times of India News Service, New Delhi, July 22—In the prevailing atmosphere of distrust between the governments of India and Pakistan and the reciprocal expulsion of diplomats, a detailed list of ISI [Information Service of India] harassment of Indian diplomats and their families sent by the ministry of external affairs (MEA) to Pakistan has been ignored by Islamabad. This is the first time that such a list has been compiled by the MEA.

A spokesman of the MEA said in the present circumstances, Indian diplomats are all extremely afraid of being posted to Pakistan. "We have been given these instances to Pakistan regularly but nothing has happened. Now we have decided to give the list to our own people to see what they can do.

"Pakistan is continuing to engage in acts of systematic vandalism, and threaten not only officials but their wives and their children. We have made so many offers of talks, but they continue to be hostile. Among foreign service officers there is a feeling that almost anything could happen. That is why we are insisting on a separate code of conduct," the spokesman said.

The ministry spokesman said that instances of Indian hostility are stage-managed by Pakistan. "In the Bajwa affair, for instance, it was clear that the entire exercise was a propaganda point. Pakistan is hell-bent on harassment and nothing else. We have been communicating with them for over a year now, but to no avail. It is a definite possibility that they are seeking international attention from these acts."

The MEA list consists of 118 specific instances over the past year in which Pakistani intelligence agents have threatened and abused Indian officials in Islamabad as well as Karachi, molested the young daughter of an Indian first secretary and even attempted to set fire to official residences.

The Pakistan government's use of "hostile surveillance" to restrict the activities of Indian diplomats is illustrated in several of the examples gathered by the ministry. On July 2 this year, the MEA note has alleged the nine year old daughter and the six year old son of Mr M. C. Nathiani, first secretary, were followed into the house by an unidentified youth who tried to molest the daughter of Mr Nathiani. The man ran away after Mr Nathiani and his wife raised an alarm.

Indian diplomats complain that their wives and children are particularly vulnerable to the increasingly aggressive surveillance which is tantamount to harassment. On March 14, 1993, for example, the wife of group Captain P. Khokhar, air adviser was harassed and threatened by a car-borne group, while she was waiting to pick up her children from the school bus. On June 19, 1993, high commission officials were tailed so closely and perilously by an ISI vehicle that there was a collision. The naval adviser, Captain A. K. Bakshi, was followed so often that

for a certain period, he was forced to leave his car in the high commission premises and walk home.

Apart from tailing cars, several other methods such as interrogating domestic help, smashing residential windows, sending anonymous letters and video cassettes, opening mail and baggage, cutting off telephone and telex lines and refusing permission to visit certain areas are used. Surveillance methods also include a certain amount of psychological pressure on the subject through constant attention. For example, Mr Francis Vaz, counsellor, was constantly followed between November 12 to December 27, often by two ISI cars and several agents.

It appears as if the odd collision is often used as an intimidatory tactic: on January 6, 1994, the car of Mr V. S. Chauhan, attache, was deliberately hit by two surveillance cars. A few days later, the curtain of the main room of the residence of Mr Arjun Singh, an official in the high commission was set on fire.

Even innocuous family outings appear to attract the attention of the Pakistani "watchers". On February 16, Mr Rajeev Kapoor, first secretary and his family were followed into a restaurant and intelligence officials remained at the adjacent table while Mr Kapoor and his family completed their meal.

Intelligence War With Pakistan Seen in Kashmir 94AS0441A Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 16 Jul 94 p 7

[Article by Manoj Joshi: "J&K Intelligence War: A Game of Foxes"; names as published]

[Text] New Delhi, July 15.—In the insurgency situation prevailing in Kashmir, intelligence work which consists of gathering information on the adversary or arresting his agents, goes along with a covert war which is fought on a different plane altogether from the ongoing struggle between the security forces and the militants. Attempting to flush out this shadowy affair is not an easy task given the nature of the subject. More than the overt battle, this covert war is a straight-forward Indo-Pak affair.

A measure of the restoration of the Indian intelligence set up in the valley has been the Hazratbal operation where intelligence agencies played a far greater role than acknowledged so far. The hidden hand of these agencies, belonging to a number of different formations—the Army, IB [Intelligence Bureau], BSF [Border Security Force] and the RAW [Research and Analysis Wing (Intelligence Agency)]—has been felt in the arrest and elimination of several top militants and foiling assassinations and bomb blasts.

Another indicator is the ability to send across agents to the training camps in Pakistan, as well as the infiltration of several militant groups.

One more dimension of this war is the one fought on the electromagnetic spectrum. At its crudest, it involves jamming Pakistan radio and TV signals to block separatist propaganda. At the more sophisticated level, it means interception of radio communications as well as radio direction-finding, to track militant headquarters and communications' centres. Several agencies handle this in the valley but there are limits to the quality of information because of precautions taken by the Pakistani agents and militant leaders.

They range from providing high-quality radio sets with built-in encryption capabilities which are difficult to intercept and decipher, to frequent changes of the training camps of the militants, and indeed creation of new groups every now and then to prevent infiltration by government agents.

"The intelligence war has gone on in Kashmir for the past 40 years and more," says a retired officer of the Intelligence Bureau. "Pakistan never did reconcile to Indian control of the valley and had sought every opportunity to destabilise it." The most celebrated event was the attempt to set Kashmir aflame through the disappearance of the Hazratbal relic. But equally dramatic was its reappearance, reportedly through the endeavour of Mr B.N. Mallik, the Intelligence Bureau chief.

There have been other events—Operation Gibraltar through which Pakistan infiltrated saboteurs into the state to touch off a rebellion which never occurred, and the hijacking of an Avro aircraft to Lahore in 1971, which was "fortuitously" used to prevent Pakistani overflights to East Pakistan in the critical build-up to the Bangladesh war.

"Things have changed since 1990," notes an intelligence officer, "the 'Islamic' angle has given the advantage to Pakistan and loyalty to India has been subverted by the support for 'azadi' or 'independence.'" The first act in the current drama was played out within a month of the launch of the movement with the assassination of half-a-dozen officials belonging to the Intelligence Bureau and the Research and Analysis Wing.

In the fashion of mofussil India, the existence of these officials was no secret and most of them were quite well known to the locals. On January 3, 1990, Mr. R.N.P. Singh was shot in Anantnag, six days later Mr. Kishen Gopal was shot in Badgam, another six days later Mr. M.L. Bhan in Nowgam, Srinagar, and on February 12, Mr. T.K. Razdan was killed in Gowkadal in Srinagar as well. Some months later a RAW officer, Gajender Singh was killed in Anantnag.

For a while, there was virtually no intelligence available to the forces. Thereafter the BSF, led by an experienced officer, Mr. Ashok Patel, reconstructed a set-up based on captured militants to ferret out their colleagues. The IB and RAW have also been making efforts to rebuild their operations.

The Army does not normally carry out intelligence work in internal security situations. However, in areas where the other agencies just cannot function, it has had to innovate, which it has done by supplementing its normal field intelligence set-up by other special units. To say that intelligence operations in the valley are hazardous would be an understatement.

The other side is not entirely idle. It has targeted key state administration officials such as the former police chief, Mr J.N. Saksena, who almost died in a bomb blast in his own office.

Foreign Interests Seen Taking Over Electrical Production

94AS0419B Jaipur RAJASTHAN PATRIKA in Hindi
22 Jul 94 p 6

[Article by Balraj Mehta: "Foreigners Will Control Electrical Production"]

[Text] Whenever American trade organizations wish to invest in India's energy sector, they will be given unusual facilities and special rights. America's Energy Minister Hazel O'Leary came to India with a 46 member panel of trade representatives with the goal of formalizing this. In the beginning electricity generation is being given priority. After this, avenues will also be opened for applying the same policy to oil, coal and nonconventional energy sources. Multinational companies will be free to import equipment from their own sources without having to go through international competition. In addition, they will themselves set prices for the electricity supplied from their electric stations. The cost of generation, which will also be determined by multinational companies, will of course be included in this price. Along with this the price will include profits which will be guaranteed. In this way costs and sale prices of electricity will increase greatly. This will also have an adverse effect on the costs and sale prices of common goods. This will not be consistent with the income of common people in India. The common people will be eliminated from the Indian market, and only the higher classes will benefit from this. It is also proposed that if there is a conflict between foreign multinational companies and Indian interests, litigation associated with this can only be carried out in foreign courts. Although further discussions are pending on this issue, it can be assumed that the government will agree to this.

This demand, which has been made for the first time by a foreign multinational corporation, is itself an insult. The corporation has already obtained approval on other conventional commercial demands.

The result of all this will be that electricity will no longer be under the control of Indians from the viewpoint of organizing the Indian economy. When Central Energy minister N.P.K. Salve assumed office, he asserted that he would not allow foreign investors to build expensive electricity schemes because the burden of this would fall

on the common consumer. He said he would not allow anybody to control us at will. But he changed. This change came after his visit to America with the Prime Minister [Rao]. Now he is announcing that it is necessary to attract foreign investment in order to improve the nation's electricity supply system, and for this special conditions must be agreed to. He has not only expressed his concurrence in the matter of equipment import, but has also agreed to give permission for the import of other required materials for electricity generation. He has also agreed that the capital expenditure limits for foreign electricity schemes be increased to Rs. 45 million per megawatt whereas the capital expenditure associated with electricity stations established in India comes to Rs. 16 million per megawatt. This decision of Salve will have far reaching effects on the national economy. In this context this agreement also deserves attention that whenever the American corporation begins producing electricity the Maharashtra Electricity Board will purchase all the electricity. Rs. 2.49 per kilowatt will be paid for this. The foreign corporations will have to be paid the full amount whether consumers for electricity purchased from them are available or not. If the Electricity Board cannot make the payment, the Central government will pay the entire bill in foreign currency.

Electricity Agencies Lack Capital

The Indian agencies that produce and distribute electricity are not able to function properly because the government does not provide them sufficient funds. They are not able to make full use of their capacity. For this reason there are always deficiencies in the work of expanding electricity production. In the eighth plan, the goal of increasing additional electricity production capacity is 48,000 megawatts, but the actual availability is not expected to be more than 20,000 megawatts. In 1992-93, electricity shortfall was 9%

compared to minimum demand and 20%

compared to maximum demand. This has increased today to 11%

and 25%

respectively. This shortfall will increase year after year. If indigenous resources are not mobilized, and our dependence on foreigners continues to increase, this problem is not going to be solved.

Despite intensive efforts, multinational corporations have so far offered proposals to establish an additional electricity production capacity of 4,000 megawatts. We will get this electricity at extremely high rates. Also indigenous capacity to produce equipment for electricity generation are not being developed. Currently India has the capacity to produce machines that will generate 6,500 megawatts of electricity a year. This capacity has been reduced in half due to government policies. It is indeed tragic that our economic resources are not being

utilized simply because we have a lack of wealth. Multi-national corporations have extra capital which they convert to fixed assets. They are looking for markets for their products and investment capital. They have converted India's tragic situation into a profit opportunity for themselves, and are demanding special conditions and concessions to increase their profits. Any government that is aware of its social responsibility will participate only in agreements that are in the interest of national economy and the consumer would not fall into the trap of foreign investors.

Electricity Boards will incur losses according to estimates by responsible experts due to the permission granted by the government for foreign investment in the energy sector. The State Electricity Boards will incur annual losses of Rs. 100-150 billion. They are already in the red by Rs. 50 billion. If electricity rates are increased three times over present rates, Electricity Boards will incur even higher losses per unit on electricity purchased from foreign companies. Salve frequently threatens the public with increased electricity rates, but with the entry of multinational corporations in the electricity sector, electricity rates will increase far more than Salve's promises. Electricity Boards lose about 24 paisa per unit based on the cost of production and recovery. Cost of electricity production comes to about Rs. 1.05 per unit; thus Boards lose about 30%

Consumer rates for electricity produced by foreign companies will have to be greatly increased. Even a 300%

increase will not cover the cost of foreign electricity.

The shortage of wealth in the country can be overcome by borrowing from foreign countries or by inviting real capital investment. But such loans or investment can only be beneficial when production is at legitimate cost and profits can be made after including the cost of services. But all this will not be possible when foreigners produce electricity. According to Salve's plan it is being assumed that it will be possible to bear the average cost of electricity production because cheap electricity will be generated in government electric installations. This is an extremely strange and surprising scheme, and makes a joke of the principles of fair competition and efficiency. The full utilization of the nation's natural resources is essential for long-term and stable socio-economic development. In this context the supply of electricity and its cost are extremely important. Multinational corporations will use more petroleum and gas for electricity generation and will not use coal. This is entirely against the principle of full utilization of the country's natural resources. If they import petroleum products and gas then the situation will be even worse. In such a situation not only must the cost of electricity production be considered, this matter of policy must also be considered. The vision of the people who initiated India's economic development was discarded during the last two decades of policy change. Now the dangerous situation has arisen in which the function of electricity

generation is being entrusted to foreigners. They will set priorities for investment in this sector, make decisions about the utilization of natural resources and determine the mode of usage. This has now become quite clear with respect to the electricity sector.

Papers Report, Comment on Rao Rally Speech

Summary of Speech

94AS0426A Hyderabad DECCAN CHRONICLE
in English 15 Jul 94 pp 1, 9

[Names as published]

[Text] New Delhi, July 14—The Prime Minister, Mr P. V. Narasimha Rao, on Thursday launched a scathing attack on the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) for mixing religion with politics and declared that the trust floated by the "banned VHP [Vishwa Hindu Parishad]" would never be allowed to construct the Ram temple at Ayodhya and suggested that the task should be left to religious leaders having no links with any political party.

Addressing a largely-attended rally organised here at the Red Fort to mark the completion of three years by his government, Mr Rao assailed the BJP and the Vishwa Hindu Parishad for dragging the name of Lord Rama for petty political gains.

"Please keep Lord Rama away from politics," the Congress president said, adding that it was blasphemous to use the Lord's name to further their political ends.

Criticising the Ram Janambhoomi Nyas, he said the Nyas was a creation of the VHP, which in turn had links with the BJP. Could anybody having links with a political party be allowed to construct a temple, he asked. Such as the grip of the VHP on the Nyas that sadhus and sants of the Nyas, for whom he had great respect, were there at the pleasure of the VHP. The banned body could appoint anyone to any post in the Nyas or remove anyone at will.

The Prime Minister revealed that he had in possession a legal document which amply makes it clear that the VHP was in full control of the trust and had absolute powers to remove or include any religious leaders on the trust. "This is nothing but an insult to sants and mahatmas," he remarked.

He said efforts were being made by some religious leaders, including the Shankaracharya, to set up a trust which would have no links with either the Congress or the BJP, or any other party.

In his nearly 100-minute speech, the Congress president asked the BJP and the Muslim League to "secularise" themselves as the politics of confrontation would lead to the disintegration of the country. There are people inside and outside the country who want to dismember India,

Mr Rao cautioned, adding that if his information was correct, the country was virtually sitting on an ammunition dump.

"There is only one part in this country, and that is the Congress," he declared amidst a chorus of "Narasimha Rao Zindabad".

The Prime Minister advised the BJP, as also the Muslim League, to "secularise themselves" in the light of the Supreme Court judgement upholding the dismissal of the erstwhile BJP governments in four northern States.

He said the political parties were welcome to raise any issue related to any aspect of national life: Issues connected with development, policy matters, like GATT or swadeshi, were all good subjects. A public debate on these issues would help people understand them, thereby take an informed view on them and decide whether or not to support them.

In his speech, the Prime Minister dealt on a number of issues, including economic liberalisation, political stability, Centre-State relations, language issue, policy of consensus, minorities and the achievements of his government in the last three years.

Mr Rao virtually kicked off his party's election campaign by asking people to consider the next 12 months as the "year of thinking" and vote for whom they wanted at the end of it.

During the elections, the vote had always been either for the Congress or against it. On each occasion the electorate recorded its displeasure with the party, there was instability necessitating elections in quick succession. This time, he would want the electorate to think and cast a positive ballot in favour of the Congress.

In a special appeal to the youth, the Prime Minister said the future belonged to them and called upon them to strengthen the party. "I am not going to be here for ever, our days are over," he said.

The Congress chief said he was not asking them to become active members of the party, because the party's support base was much beyond the limits of membership, but to realise that the Congress was the only party that could deliver the goods. At a time when other political parties were collapsing, the Congress was growing from strength to strength mainly because it was not a personality-oriented party. There was no generation gap in the Congress, unlike in other parties, and the next rung of leaders would take over smoothly from the older generation, he said.

Speaking in Hindi, with an occasional English equivalent being used to explain the more complex Sanskritised portions in familiar terms, the Prime Minister dwelt at length on the progress in different fields of development.

Starting with agriculture, Mr Rao said the Food Corporation of India (FCI) godowns were overflowing with

grain. While it was true that foodgrains were not available at Rs [Rupees] 2 or Rs 3 a kilo, it was good to know that we would not have to import foodgrains. As for the prices, he explained that these depended upon the remunerative prices being given to farmers for their produce. It was a balance between the needs of the producer and the consumer and the only way the government could maintain the price line at a low level was by subsidies. This however, was not the answer to the situation because subsidising foodgrains to such an extent would hurt investments in other sectors, like education and health, something he was not willing to let happen.

While it could be argued that the prices could be brought down, he was nonetheless happy to note that foodgrains reached the needy in far-flung areas through the revamped Public Distribution System (PDS). It was not too long ago that there were complaints of the commodities not reaching remote villages, he said.

Making a passing reference to the ongoing sugar imports and the controversies surrounding the imports, the Prime Minister said there was no escape from sugar imports just now. Sugar had to be imported to meet the demand and he would look into the controversy aspect. The country's administration was large and due to its sheer size alone it was found to have shortcomings. It was unfair to hold him personally responsible for them, Mr Rao said while recalling Indira Gandhi's remarks, from the same venue, about how her orders got lost while percolating downwards to the villages. This was not to mean that he condoned laxity, the Congress president stressed while promising to try and rectify the shortcomings.

Reiterating his commitment to rural development, the Prime Minister said the outlay for this sector had been raised to Rs 30,000 in the Eighth Plan from Rs 10,000 crore in the last Plan period. It was an unprecedented hike in allocation in any sector till now, he said. The increased allocations would be utilised to create greater employment avenues in the rural areas so that migration to urban areas, in search of livelihood, could be checked. Mr Rao then detailed some of the plans the government had launched in this direction. The Mahila Samvridhi Yojana launched last year had resulted in over 11 lakh accounts being opened by rural women totalling a contribution of about Rs 14 crore. This money would be used in improving health and education facilities in the rural areas. He expressed hope that these measures would also lead to improvement in women's status in society and reduce atrocities on them.

The most valuable asset of any nation was its human resource, he said while elaborating on the steps being taken by the government to develop this resource in all its aspects. In this context, he urged the States to pay adequate attention to developing local languages as also contributing to the development of Hindi as a link language. Dwelling at some length on the status of Urdu in the country and the bogey being raised in certain

quarters connecting the language to a particular community, Mr Rao said Urdu was as much an Indian language as any other, and belonged to all the people. He, like many of his generation, had been educated in Urdu medium. It would be counter productive to link the language with a community, he warned, even as he admitted that it was a sensitive issue requiring tactful handling. There was a cell in the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) which received weekly reports in this regard, he said.

Vehemently refuting criticism that he was "selling away" the country, the Prime Minister said he had not even pawned the country. "In fact, I retrieved the gold that was pawned abroad," he said. It was not as if the people levelling these charges did not know the facts themselves, but thought they could gain some political mileage from such talk, he said referring to the high-pitched Opposition campaign before his United States visit recently.

"Who can sell this country away?", he thundered before providing the answer himself that nobody could do so, least of all himself, who was just a tenant in office governing the country. He would be gone soon and somebody else would come in his place, he said.

Inviting foreign capital into the country, he said, could not be dubbed as selling the country away, since the funds were intended to provide an impetus to our development efforts and steps to generate employment. Unemployment, a problem that had several ramifications, could not be solved without speedy industrialisation, and this required funds of a magnitude the government was not capable of ploughing in right now. If there was private investment into industry, private or foreign, the government would have money to spend on equally important social sector, providing education and health care facilities to the people.

The Prime Minister also refuted allegations that he was killing the public sector. Recalling that it was the Congress that created the public sector, he asked if there was ever a mother who killed her own child. At the same time, the public sector could not be pampered beyond all reason, making heavy investments that did not yield adequate returns. The public sector had to deliver the goods, fulfil its obligations by the people, he said. There was also several needless areas in which the public sector had extended over the years, and the investment here could be better utilised in other priority sectors, he said.

Describing himself as the inheritor of Nehruvian and Congress policies, Mr Rao said his government would never deviate from the path shown by Jawaharlal Nehru regarding the public sector.

"The path is the same, but the pace has quickened," the Prime Minister said.

He denied that in the quest of economic liberalisation, the public sector was being "destroyed." It was the

Congress, under Nehru, which had set up the public sector and "I do not have any intention of destroying it," he asserted.

While his government would never privatise vital areas of production like the defence, it would not hesitate to hand over areas, like power and electricity, to private enterprise so that the funds, sometime as large as Rs 8,000 crore, could be diverted to welfare schemes like education, health, children and women, Mr Rao, said.

"I have not called this rally to praise myself but to report to you the achievements of the last three years," Mr Rao told the restless people who stood listening to him on a hot sweltering day.

He repeatedly said this was a "reporting meeting" where he would seek to draw the difference in the country between the "darkness that descended" after the tragic assassination of Rajiv Gandhi and India in 1994.

Mr Rao admitted that though, by and large, peace had come to most parts of the country, there were still pockets of tension. He stressed the importance of peace if there was to be progress.

"Peace is essential to anything, to progress and Congress has had a hand in bringing about peace and easing tensions," he said.

India was at the crossroads today and it was time for reflection over the next one year before people decided who to vote for, the Congress president averred.

Over the last three years, the Congress government had only followed to the letter all the promises made by party in its election manifesto in 1991.

The Congress was resilient with the ability to change a bit with the times, which is why it was the only organisation that had survived for the last 110 years and would be around for next 500 years or so, he said.

Mr Rao explained the entire gamut of policy changes wrought by his government and said the purpose was to set India on the unassailable path of progress.

Mr Rao said he had no "desire to stick to the chair and I pledge and swear I will do my job."

But the Centre cannot run the States and the panchayat, they will all have to do their bit, he said.

He said his government and party had a social responsibility which it would seek to fulfil.

Crowd Reaction Lukewarm

94AS0426B Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English
15 Jul 94 p 1

[Text] New Delhi, July 14—Rain or storm, we'll be there—at the Red Fort. That's what the banners said.

But when the president of the Congress(I), Mr P. V. Narasimha Rao, arrived to address the meeting, the thousands under the scorching sun wished their fear had come true.

They cursed the sweltering heat, rushed to the already overcrowded water tankers stationed outside and wondered aloud whether the leaders were aware of their plight.

The number of people who turned up for the rally must have brought a smile on the faces of leaders who had toiled to ensure record attendance for The Event To Celebrate Three Years of Congress(I) Rule.

However, whether these smiles remained when thousands began filtering out of the Red Fort grounds half-way through Mr Rao's address is an altogether different story.

"Rajiv ji wali baat nahin hai (he lacks Rajiv Gandhi's appeal)", said an elderly gentleman, one of those who left early. He identified himself as being part of the group which had arrived from Etah, Uttar Pradesh.

His view found quite a few takers, for there were many who were tempted to compare the two leaders—and arrived at similar conclusions.

Their attendance at the rally was marked by a singular lack of enthusiasm. Missing were the roars of approval during Mr Rao's speech that party managers were banking upon.

The veteran singer, Mahendra Kapoor, who had arrived with his troupe almost two hours before Mr Rao reached the venue, could evoke barely a hum from the participants as he sang several "patriotic" songs.

Not even Ameen Sayani, whose voice has kept millions of radio listeners enthralled over the years, could enthuse the crowd which became restless as the clock ticked past 11 a.m., Mr Rao's scheduled time of arrival.

He finally arrived at noon. And as if on cue, almost immediately, Mr Kapoor broke out into a song eulogising Mr Rao and his achievements.

However, much before Mr Rao's address came to an end, thousands were already out on Netaji Subhash Marg, discussing their plans for the rest of the day. Rajesh Bhai, a Congress(I) worker from eastern Uttar Pradesh, was armed with a list of places he was planning to visit.

"I do not want to waste this opportunity. Now that I have done my job, listening to Rao sahib as he spoke on the issues at hand, I want to go around the city", he said. Others had begun the walk back to their vehicles, parked some distance from the venue.

There were a large number of people who never went to the venue, preferring to loiter around in Daryaganj and at Rajghat, looking with awe at the structures which dot

the city landscape. Many of them were not even aware of what Mr Rao had said in his speech.

"What difference does it make?", said a farmer from Haryana. "It is the job of the leaders to deliver speeches".

Confident that the crowd on the roads would enter the ground, the AICC(I) [All India Congress Committee-I] general secretary, Mr Sushil Kumar Shinde, even requested the security staff—before Mr Rao had arrived—to facilitate smooth entry of rallyists who, he claimed, were unable to come to the venue as the entrances were crowded.

Earlier, right from the morning, groups of Congressmen marched towards Red Fort, dancing and shouting slogans praising Mr Rao. Others, to escape the sweltering heat, had decided to travel in buses and march from points closer to the venue.

Many a worker had decided that the cut-outs of Mr Rao needed a hand or two. Perching them on their shoulders, they walked on the roads, drawing amused glances from Delhiites trying their best to reach offices on time.

At about 10 a.m., a roar went up as Air Force helicopters circled the venue. Residents of the Walled City were treated to the unusual sight of sharpshooters climbing atop rooftops. With binoculars and walkie-talkies in hand, they kept a watchful eye on the scene below.

Security for the rally was unprecedented. Police officials said that even though the "threat perception" was low compared to meetings in earlier years, they had decided not to take a chance.

A person had to pass through several layers of police personnel before arriving at the entrances, where they were frisked and made to walk through metal detectors.

BJP Assessment

94AS0426C *THE HINDU* in English 15 Jul 94 p 14

[Names as published]

[Text] New Delhi, July 14—All negative adjectives in the dictionary have been used by the Bharatiya Janata Party [BJP] to describe the biggest show put up by the Congress during the three years of the Narasimha Rao regime. "Uninspiring speech... inattentive and non-responsive crowd... lacking in credibility... confused and defensive..." was the verdict of the party spokesperson, Mr. K. L. Sharma, on the Prime Minister's performance at the Red Fort rally.

The party has accused the ruling party of "unprecedented misuse of government machinery" to project the image of the Congress president, Mr. Rao. And Mr. Sharma said Mr. Rao's claim that he was implementing the Nehruvian model of the economy was "enough to destroy the credibility of the entire speech."

The BJP found the speech "uninspiring," the crowd "inattentive" and "non-responsive," "confused" and "defensive" throughout failing to convince anyone of the achievements of his government. The "blatant lie" that he was following the Nehruvian model for the economy had destroyed all credibility.

The party has also taken note of Mr. Rao's reference to the Ram temple issue and has commented that while he was "surmonising" to other political parties that they should leave the issue alone, "he was himself suffering from a Ram temple phobia." It also noted with satisfaction that even during this victory rally Mr. Rao was "forced to mention" the internal squabbles within the Congress.

Ram Janmabhoomi Nyas Demand

A two-day meeting of the Ram Janmabhoomi Nyas Manch which began here today has demanded that Parliament should adopt a resolution on the Ayodhya issue stating that a Ram temple will be built at the same spot where the makeshift Ram temple now stands. It has also sought a written assurance from the government that no mosque will be allowed to be built within the limits of Ayodhya.

The meeting, under the chairmanship of Shankaracharya Vasudevanand Saraswati of Jyotishpeeth, adopted a resolution making this demand and stating that unless this was done it would be useless to talk of setting up another trust for the Ram temple. It seems that the Vishwa Hindu Parishad [VHP]—the Ram Nyas Manch is controlled by it—has held out a lollipop to the government in that if it were to promise that the temple would come up at the site of the demolished Babri Masjid, the VHP may consider the possibility of not opposing the setting up of a new trust.

The Vishwa Hindu Parishad president, Mr. Vishnu Hari Dalmia, and the secretary-general, Mr. Ashok Singhal, were both present at the meeting.

This is also being seen as a ploy by the VHP to try and pin the Congress down to a clear statement on its position on the Ayodhya issue which it has preferred to leave as vague, hoping to pacify both the Hindu as well as the Muslim sentiments.

The meeting also confirmed the earlier programme of "sant yatras" throughout the country from October 14 to 24. The Manch has claimed that 30,000 "sadhus" and "sants" will participate in this "yatras".

Muslim Reaction

94AS0426D *Madras THE HINDU* in English 20 Jul 94 p 13

[Article by Harish Khare: "Rao Fails To Win back Muslims' Trust"]

[Text] New Delhi, July 19—"I have nothing to comment on the Ayodhya issue," was the laconic reply Mr. V. N. Gadgil, the AICC [All India Congress Committee] spokesman, gave yesterday to the newsmen's query on the meaning of the Prime Minister's reference to the Ram Janambhoomi/Babri Masjid controversy during his speech last week at the Congress rally in Delhi.

Mr. Gadgil's diffidence is representative of a wider confusion in the Congress ranks, which, in turn, is reflective of the studied ambiguity on the party's relationship with the minorities.

The most significant aspect of Mr. Narasimha Rao's remarks was the care he took not to mention "Babri Masjid" or "Masjid". Though some senior Congressmen have expressed surprise that Mr. Rao should have at all raked up a controversy that for all practical purposes had been given a decent burial, others believe that the Prime Minister has brilliantly stolen Mr. L. K. Advani's thunder. However, on August 15 last year, Mr. Rao had promised from the ramparts of the Red Fort that "Whatever has been demolished, we will build it, rebuild it."

It had been noted that the Prime Minister was carefully vague about the site of the Ram Mandir. "He has made it very clear that the Vishwa Hindu Parishad-backed trust will not be allowed to build the temple," observes Mr. P. R. Kumaramangalam, former Union Minister who earlier was intimately involved in the Ayodhya negotiations.

Rao's "Soft Hindutva"

On the other hand, Mr. Javed Habib, a leading moderate Muslim leader, believes that the Prime Minister's remarks ought to be seen in the political compulsions before the Congress. He suggests that Mr. Rao has decided to plug the "soft Hindutva" line, as opposed to the BJP's [Bharatiya Janata Party] "hard Hindutva" line. Mr. Habib's argument is that as caste and region have become dominant political emotion, the Congress has no compulsion to care about the minorities.

The omission of any reference to the Masjid, coupled with Mr. Rao's rather sharp warning on advocacy of the Urdu language, would suggest that the ruling party does not feel obliged to pander to the minorities' sentiments. Nor, it would appear, is Mr. Rao prepared to give the BJP any cause to accuse the Congress of "appeasing" the Muslim vote-bank.

The Prime Minister had obliquely referred to the possibility of a "backlash" should the future of the Urdu language come to be seen as the sole concern of one community. Nor can Mr. Rao be unaware of the possible ramifications of the militants' threats to disrupt the Amarnath Yatra.

The bottom-line for the Congress managers remains that after December 6, 1992 the Muslims are not prepared to trust Mr. Narasimha Rao. Individual Congress leaders are aware of this and some like the Railway Minister,

Mr. Jaffer Sharief have occasionally sought to raise the party's troubled relationship with the minorities. In the last two months, senior Congress Muslim leaders have held a few meetings to take stock of the situation. But such deliberations have not been able to think of ways of overcoming the Muslims' distrust of Mr. Rao. On the other hand, the Muslim voter seems inclined to give the benefit of the doubt to various non-Congress groups like Mr. Mulayam Singh Yadav's Samajvadi Party, rather than adopt the "forgive and forget" stance towards Mr. Rao's Congress.

Cong-Muslim Emotional Gap

The Narasimha Rao regime too is aware of the emotional distance between it and the minorities. Its hope is that the Muslim voter would not overlook the fact that the Prime Minister's policies have brought "peace" and a "riot-free" atmosphere—much to the relief of the minorities. It is therefore inclined to take the bureaucratic, rather than the political, path of proving to the minorities that their welfare was very much on its list of priorities.

For example, the Government had listed, in response to an unstarred question in the Rajya Sabha on May 6, the following steps it had taken to promote the minorities' welfare: (1) Statutory status for the Minorities Commission; (2) a UGC [University Grants Commission]-run coaching scheme in 20 universities and 31 colleges for weaker sections of minorities to enable them to complete competitive/entrance examinations; (3) extension centres of community polytechnics in minority concentration districts; (4) a Rs. 5-crore grant-in-aid to the Maulana Azad Education Foundation; (5) inclusion of "persons belonging to minority communities" in the Rapid Action Force; and (6) inclusion of those sections of minorities which figure in the list of the OBCs [expansion not given] for the purpose of reservation in civil services and Central Government jobs.

Above all, there is a proposal for a "National Minorities Development and Finance Corporation" with an authorised share capital of Rs. 500 crores to promote the economic development of weaker sections among the minorities. The Prime Minister, in his celebration rally speech, indicated that he hoped to announce the details on August 15—though last Independence Day also Mr. Rao had promised that the corporation would be set up "soon."

Leadership Confirmed

94AS0426E Hyderabad DECCAN CHRONICLE
in English 16 Jul 94 p 1

[Text] If the Talkatora session of the AICC [All India Congress Committee] provided evidence of the disappearance of all challenge to Mr. P. V. Narasimha Rao's leadership, the mammoth rally in the capital on Thursday credibly confirmed his entrenchment as India's unquestioned leader and the beacon light of the

ruling party. The Congress party managers could not help the discomfort caused by the rigour of the blazing sun, but otherwise they appeared to have succeeded in making the rally a truly memorable event which is bound to be a reference point in any future discussions of the politics of rallies. The Congress president also contributed impressively to make the rally a qualitatively different kind of show. Instead of sabre-rattling or playing to the gallery or indulging in high-flown rhetoric, he made the event an occasion for a heart-to-heart chat between him and his partymen. He was objective in giving his performance report for the last three years, and he did so with sophistication and finesse, claiming credit where credit was due and offering clarifications where there could be doubts and misgivings. In the process, he made it clear that he would not stick to the chair if he felt he was not delivering the goods. Equally candidly, he had a gentle dig at the "senior generation" in the Congress which appeared to be more guilty of factionalism than the younger set. He told them that the party would have no future if they kept up the infighting. Striking a personal note, he also pointed to the impermanence of human life and invited a media debate on his possible successors.

On the broader plane, some of Mr Narasimha Rao's statements were of enormous political significance. First, his admonition of the Bharatiya Janata Party [BJP] for persisting with mixing politics and religion. Second, his advice to all political parties to secularise themselves so that elections can be fought on issues germane to the day to day life of the citizens and the national well-being. It touched the core of the communal problem: the more secular the electoral campaign the cleaner will be the political atmosphere. Third, his assertion that trusts created by political parties would not be allowed to build a Ram temple at Ayodhya. The Prime Minister has projected this official position on numerous occasions in the past, but this time he went a step further to assert that only the trusts set up by religious leaders could be entrusted with the responsibility of building the temple or the mosque. Mr Narasimha Rao naturally could not comment on the site of the proposed temple and mosque since the Supreme Court would have to give its finding on the crucial question of whether or not the Babri structure stood on the debris of a temple.

Although the issue of an extension of the Cabinet Secretary's tenure is a minor matter in the context of the larger questions which Mr Rao was dealing with, he deliberately used the occasion to declare that the Government of India functions on the basis of secular principles and decides on the status of its serving officers on merit and not on the basis of their religion. This assertion will be useful, particularly since the BJP loses no opportunity to communalise every issue merely in order to draw political and electoral advantage out of it. One hopes that the BJP will bear the Prime Minister's declaration in mind when a final decision is taken on Mr Zafar Saifullah's future.

There will be many in the country, particularly in other political parties, who will interpret Mr Narasimha Rao's speech as the official inauguration of the party's election campaign for the Assembly polls. There may be a modicum of truth in their interpretation, for the simple reason that all politicians have (or ought to have) an eye on the elections whenever they interact with the public. However, while conceding this, we are tempted to infer that Mr Rao's message is intended both for those States which are scheduled to go for the polls and those in which the Congress party is in the doghouse. The Prime Minister was impressing on the Indian electorate as a whole that it was the Congress party alone which would always remain the party of governance in the country. Which other party (or leader) could have so patiently converted the minority in the Lok Sabha to a majority without disturbing the polity in any way? "Continuity with change" is a slogan which the party coined after Nehru's death, and it has now been able to translate it into action.

Venkataraman Interviewed, Compliments Rao

94AS0427A Hyderabad DECCAN CHRONICLE
in English 22 Jul 94 pp 1, 12

[Article by P.A. Rama Rao: "P.V. Is Doing a Very Good Job: R.V.," names as published]

[Text] New Delhi, July 21—The former President, Mr R. Venkataraman, has complimented the Prime Minister, Mr P. V. Narasimha Rao, saying "he is doing a very good job in the conditions in which he is placed."

Commenting on Press reports which suggest that Mr Rao was a ditherer, the former President said: "He doesn't give his decisions, views and opinions to others. And therefore, it looks as if he has not decided. He is a person who is very circumspect, he doesn't act in a rush, he doesn't act in haste, he doesn't express himself in harsh language."

Mr Venkataraman said this in his first major interview, after retirement to the video magazine, *Eyewitness*, on the occasion of the publication of his memoirs, "My Presidential Years."

The interview would be broadcast on July 22 at 9 pm on Doordarshan's Metro channel.

Earlier when Mr Venkataraman was asked to comment on the Prime Minister, he refused. Questioned if this was because his opinion was uncomplimentary, the former President said: "He knows me, I know him. We know each other for a long number of years. Whatever I say on television is not going to impress him or going to prejudice him against me."

In the interview, which lasted 75 minutes, Mr Venkataraman spoke on former Prime Ministers Rajiv Gandhi, Mr V. P. Singh and Mr Chandra Shekhar, the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC), Mr T. N. Seshan, the demolition of Babri Masjid, his life in Rashtrapathi

Bhavan, and the political developments that took place during his tenure as Vice-President and later as the Head of State.

Mr Venkataraman said that he was "really unhappy when the masjid part of the monument (in Ayodhya) was destroyed, demolished. In my view no Hindu in the entire history of India has ever desecrated or destroyed or demolished a place of worship of any religion, including his own. Well, this is very unfortunate. I was rather unhappy about it."

The former President said Rajiv Gandhi lacked parliamentary experience, was lax about attending the Lok Sabha, and boldly advised as regards Parliament. Mr Venkataraman praised Mr V. P. Singh and Mr Chandra Shekhar. He hinted that Dr Manmohan Singh was appointed Finance Minister at his suggestion.

Commenting on Rajiv Gandhi, he said: "Rajiv lacked parliamentary experience. You see, for the most part he did not attend the House. And whenever there was a crisis he was not present in the House. To my knowledge and information he was advised badly about going to the House."

"Rajiv did not have the experience to realise that life is not logic. He thought that like an experiment in physics, chemistry, certain things will necessarily lead to other consequences. There are a number of imponderables and they can be understood only by a person who has had a lot of experience of life. To some extent his lack of experience stood in his way."

Mr Venkataraman said that Rajiv did not have the parliamentary qualities of his grandfather, Jawaharlal Nehru. He said that if Rajiv had had greater parliamentary experience, he would have handled the Bofors crisis much better. "Lack of parliamentary experience, to some extent, put him in trouble."

He said that he had advised Rajiv to attend Parliament more often, but suggested that this had not been heeded to. "I have said that he has to be in the House, he has to meet the members, I have done all these things."

Speaking about Mr V. P. Singh, the former President said, "if he had a majority he would have proved to be a good PM." When told that this was a very strong comment of praise, the former President replied, "I speak honestly, sincerely."

With reference to Chandra Shekhar, he opined: "Chandra Shekhar was really a person after my heart, a man with Gandhian ideals, a man who believed in rural industrialisation, in the welfare of the masses and so on. But what could he do? He had no majority in the House. And it looked as if the tail was wagging the head. Therefore, he could not do anything. In fact, he was very good material and he would have proved effective had he had a majority."

Mr Venkataraman was less complimentary about Mr Seshan. He said the CEC was "a little brash and he is rushing to the Press very often."

Explaining further, he said: "A bureaucrat should not be heard at all. A bureaucrat is one who doesn't talk, he does the work, he doesn't speak about it."

Mr Venkataraman also spoke at length about an incident that occurred on 8th June 1987 when he was the Vice-President and a senior Congress member of Parliament approached him to suggest that the President of the Day, Giani Zail Singh, was prepared to dismiss the then Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi, and ask Mr Venkataraman to take office as Prime Minister. "The suggestion was that the President would dismiss the Prime Minister and then he will immediately appoint another person as Prime Minister and that person will immediately call for the dissolution of the House. They asked me whether I would be the other person."

"It shocked me because I am not given to any kind of political machinations. It was ridiculous that they should come and suggest this to me, a person with such high standards of public conduct. I tried to dissuade them and I finally told them I have nothing to do with this."

However, he refused to reveal the name of either the senior Congress MP or the names of Opposition leaders, who on 13th June 1987, approached him with the same suggestion. "They spoke to me in confidence. I can say what they spoke, but I can't say who spoke."

Speaking about the appointment of the Chandra Shekhar government in November 1990, the former President said that he had been given an unconditional guarantee of support for this government by Rajiv which was not fulfilled.

"I checked with Rajiv Gandhi whether he was giving unconditional support to Chandra Shekhar. He said yes. I even asked 'will it last at least one year?' He said, 'why one year? It can last till the end of the term.' I went out of the way to ask him to give it in writing. And he gave in writing that he gives unconditional support to Chandra Shekhar."

However, when asked whether this meant that Rajiv had let him down, the former President replied, with a laugh, "he didn't let me down. He let down Chandra Shekhar."

Referring to a comment in his book that he might have been naive in accepting Rajiv's assurances, Mr Venkataraman said: "Looking at what happened in the case of Charan Singh, it might probably have been not appropriate to accept this kind of assurance. But then my purpose was to form a government without going to the polls at that time. Therefore, we had to choose the lesser of the evils."

Speaking about the criteria he had adopted in the appointment of three successive Prime Ministers from a

hung Parliament, Mr Venkataraman said that he followed the British precedent and approached, in turn, each of the parties according to their size in the Lok Sabha. "The objective test is whoever has the majority, the largest number, you call him first. If he is unable to form the government or declines you call the next party. This is exactly what happened." He said this was "an objective test" and it was not dependent on "subjective thinking."

The former President revealed that on two occasions he had recommended the creation of a national government, but both times the idea had not found favour with senior politicians of all parties. The first occasion was after the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi when, he said, "I apprehended there will be an upheaval in the country, that there would be a flare up all over and, therefore I thought it would be the right occasion when all parties should come together and form a national government."

The second occasion was when "we were in the throes of a financial crisis, we were on the eve of defaulting."

He added that if, in his opinion, a national government had been formed, "we might have saved many of the conditionalities of the IMF."

He said the reason why his suggestion had not found favour is because "in our country people are very reluctant to share power."

Mr Venkataraman described Rashtrapathi Bhavan as a "glorified prison."

"You have every advantage, every facility, every one of your needs looked into, attended and so on. But then the security arrangement there is so stifling that I couldn't take a walk in the evening unless attended by a dozen people. There were a lot of restrictions which irked me very much, and, particularly, in the early years I felt it was disgusting that you are subject to so many restrictions. In fact, there is no privacy at all."

He said that although the main reception rooms in the Rashtrapathi Bhavan were in good shape many other things were poorly attended to.

"There are a lot of things which had come to Rashtrapathi Bhavan as gifts, as presentations, as mementos. There was no classification of any of these things, no inventory of these and nobody realised the value of these things. Apparently the staff didn't have an idea of either the importance or the value of these things."

Asked whether the Rashtrapathi Bhavan needed proper maintenance staff, like other presidential houses abroad, he replied, with a laugh, "we are supposed to have them but the only thing is they don't work."

When asked why he had broken with convention and become the first President to write a book of over 650 pages revealing in such detail the events during his time as President, Mr Venkataraman explained: "I had considerable hesitation before starting this work. I realised

that none of the outstanding Presidents like Dr Rajendra Prasad or Dr Radhakrishnan had written about the presidential years of theirs. So I was a little hesitant whether I should rush where angels feared to tread. But I came to the conclusion that my period witnessed a lot of constitutional crisis and a lot of decisions had to be taken by the President with regard to the appointment of the PMs, the procedures to be followed and so on and I thought it would be very useful to the country as a precedent."

The former President revealed that he had kept some 12 volumes of diaries, meticulously written by hand, in which he had personally recorded everything during his time as the Head of State and which formed the basis of his book.

He said that the Government of India had no idea what his book contained and that his memoirs were being published neither with the approval nor the disapproval of the government.

Panel Admits Need for Action in Northeast

94AS0440A Calcutta THE SUNDAY STATESMAN
in English 17 Jul 94 p 1

[Article by Subrata Sen: "Elaborate PDS (Public Distribution System) Suggested. Centre Admits Need for Action in North-East"]

[Text] New Delhi, July 16—Following an extensive tour of the North-eastern States, three high-level Ministerial committees have concluded that unless immediate action is taken, the entire region may turn out to be politically unmanageable.

With Jammu and Kashmir already posing grave security problems, the Union Government is considering an action-plan for the North-East [N.-E.], which seeks to check the trend of secessionism in the area through all-round economic development for the seven N.-E. States.

Sources said that the Prime Minister, Mr P.V. Narasimha Rao, after reviewing several Intelligence reports on insurgency in the region, had formed three committees to look into the state of affairs in the seven North-eastern States.

- The first committee, comprising Dr Manmohan Singh and Mrs Margaret Alva, visited several parts of Tripura and Assam during the last two months.
- The second committee, which included the Home Minister, Mr. S.B. Chavan, and Mr P.A. Sangma, was asked to look into the insurgency problem in Meghalaya.
- The third committee, comprising Mr Pranab Mukherjee and Mr Santosh Mohan Dev, toured different parts of Manipur and Assam to find out the problems faced by the locals.

Sources said that the three committees, after holding joint discussions, have decided to present a combined report to the Prime Minister.

Also, the committees have reportedly given several recommendations to curb the trend of insurgency in this region. The report is likely to be forwarded to the Prime Minister within a day or two, sources said.

Sources pointed out that the North-East is being given utmost importance by the Prime Minister because of two reasons.

—Elections in six out of seven States in the region are due within a year, making the region politically very important for the ruling Congress(I).

—Intelligence reports suggest that ISI (Information Service of India) had allegedly shifted its base from the western part of the country to the North-East, following the crackdown after the Bombay blasts.

Sources said that the members of the Ministerial committees met the Chief Ministers, Governors and eminent citizens of the North-eastern States during their recent visit to these areas.

The committee members reportedly found that there was considerable public support for secessionism. In fact, the team comprising Mr Mukherjee and Mr Dev, which visited several parts of Nagaland, found that the demand of a Greater Nagaland nation enjoyed considerable public support, sources said.

Several prominent citizens of the region, including influential personalities from the church, have started supporting the idea of forming a nation comprising Nagaland, parts of Manipur, Tripura and Assam. The situation may soon get out of hand, the committee felt, unless immediate action is taken.

Also, several steps have been suggested to defuse tribal-nontribal conflicts by arranging for an elaborate public distribution system in the tribal areas.

Anticorruption Campaign in Bihar Seen Important

94AS0419D Jalandhar PUNJAB KESARI in Hindi
30 Jul 94 p 4

[Article by Tavlin Singh: "S.K. Sinha's Fight Against Lalu Yadav Government in Bihar is Even More Important than Khairnar's"]

[Text] The face of a Bihar bureaucrat has become quite familiar to Delhi newspapers. He can be seen carrying newspaper cuttings and court orders in his briefcase in the hope that one more publication of his story of injustice done to him by the Bihar government will get him justice. The Indian administrative officer S.K. Sinha, who is still lawfully the managing director of the Bihar State Tourism Development Corporation and Ranchi's Ashoka Hotel Corporation, has not received his salary for the last 27 months. The Supreme Court has

ordered the Bihar government to pay his salary but these things do not appear to have had any effect on Bihar Chief Minister Lalu Yadav. Expert lawyers like V.M. Tarkunde and Nani Palkhiwala are handling Sinha's case without taking fees.

It is difficult to say why some stories become so interesting while others receive no public attention. This is why in Maharashtra, Govind Khairnar became a public hero by opposing Sharad Pawar, whereas Sinha's struggle against the Bihar government has not received much public attention. In many ways Sinha's struggle is more important. He is struggling against India's most unruly and worthless government, whereas Khairnar is revolting against a government that, no matter how corrupt, has done much good work for Maharashtra.

Under Pawar's leadership the state has attracted more foreign investment during the last year than any other Indian state. Under his leadership Bombay has recovered from the brink of chaos. He came into power after Bombay's most horrific communal riots and ruinous bomb explosions. Despite the death of over 200 people in the bomb explosions and the death of almost 2000 in communal riots, not only did Bombay return to normal but it is on a path of economic reform that the nation is trying to emulate. Despite this Khairnar was successful in making Pawar appear a villain, whereas Sinha has still not been able to convince people that under Lalu's rule there is no law and order in Bihar.

Sinha's story is quite ordinary. In 1991 he drew the wrath of one of Lalu Yadav's ministers when he exposed this minister trying to cheat the State Tourism Development Corporation of Rs. 500,000. This money was being paid to a friend of this minister ostensibly for construction work. Sinha said that this contractor was already blacklisted and in any such case such a huge amount cannot be paid in this way.

The minister did not like this interference so he transferred Sinha to an insignificant post to keep his mouth shut. Sinha appealed to the Central Administrative Authority which decided that his transfer was malicious, and reinstated him to his old post. The Bihar government ignored this decision. This resulted in a long legal struggle which has now reached the Supreme Court. But Sinha has not been paid for the last 27 months.

The Bihar government has been given eight court orders to pay Sinha (of which two are from the Supreme Court). Meanwhile Sinha has become nearly helpless. He says, "Even if I am paid now it will take me at least a year to pay off my debts. Despite being helped at no cost by Tarkunde and Palkhiwala [lawyers], I have spent Rs. 75,000 in the Supreme Court alone."

When I asked Sinha how a state government could ignore Supreme Court orders, he smiled. "Only people living outside Lalu's Bihar can ask this question." He says that the rule of law is extinct in Bihar. At least he is

still housed in his government quarters, other bureaucrats have been thrown out of their residences without notice.

Narrating the story of a neighboring bureaucrat Sinha said that one day when he reached his house he found all his possessions on the road. A minister with criminal contacts had taken a fancy to his house so he had all the bureaucrat's belongings thrown out. This is what happens in Bihar today. Nobody asks any questions. Exactly the same way as nobody asks many questions about the Yadav gangs who have contacts in 'high' places and who extract ransom and commit mass murders. The police personnel and officers who once tried to do honest work have also now realized that this is useless because the only reward for this is a transfer.

Despite this Lalu was successful last week in defeating a no-confidence motion in the Bihar Legislative Assembly. In the motion the primary allegation by the opposition was that there remains no law and order in Bihar. The opposition leader Ram Ashray Prasad Singh called the Chief Minister "guru of the criminalization of politics." He also said that under the Janata Dal government all state institutions have become a joke. The bureaucracy is discouraged and the judicial system has become nearly dysfunctional because of the accumulation of thousands of cases over recent years.

This not the first time that this has been said. The Patna High Court chief justice also indicated a few months ago that the state government has jammed the justice system because of its non-cooperation. He said that 6,300 cases are pending in Nalanda district and 2,900 in Saharsa. This has happened because one third of the judicial magistrate posts are vacant and there have been no appointments for many High Court services.

How is Lalu surviving despite doing all this? The credit for this goes to the English press, which due to some mistaken belief spent several years making Lalu a hero. It was said that it does not matter if he is the brother of a peon and the son of a poor and illiterate person. Is it not a momentous achievement that he has become a chief minister? His criminal connections and disrespect towards administration were deliberately ignored. On the other hand Pawar is facing allegations for forgetting his industrialist friends and his past.

We have also ignored the fact the Janata Dal came into existence by assuming an anti-corruption and anti-Bofors platform. This party brought itself into power by smearing Rajiv Gandhi. Today the same party is responsible for an administration that has given a new meaning to the word corruption. Bihar is paying the price for Lalu's poor administration.

Impact of Khairnar Allegations Viewed

Pawar Reputation Ruined

94AS0418A Jalandhar PUNJAB KESARI in Hindi
29 Jul 94 p 6

[Editorial: "Has Khairnar Knocked Down Pawar's Fort?"]

[Text] Who is this man anyway? Who is this person who has shaken up the throne of Sharad Pawar, a strong contender for prime minister and Maharashtra's chief minister? He is no one else but Khairnar, the unsophisticated suspended deputy commissioner of the task force that destroys illegal settlements in Bombay. There is a strange war going on between Mr. Pawar and Mr. Khairnar these days. Khairnar, a mere deputy commissioner in the Bombay Municipal Corporation, is busy destroying the fame of Chief Minister Sharad Pawar who is considered the pride of Maharashtra. Khairnar has been attacking not only Sharad Pawar but the strong fort of Maharashtra Congress Party for the last month through his speeches and interviews. Khairnar became a hero overnight when Chief Minister Sharad Pawar issued the order suspending him from his position. Khairnar visited New Delhi recently and shredded Pawar in the Press Club there before returning to Bombay.

The tension between Khairnar and Sharad Pawar had started when the latter became the chief minister, however, this open war started only a month ago when Khairnar publicly challenged the chief minister's statement declaring that Dawood Ibrahim did not own any property in the state. Mr. Pawar had also announced a reward of 1.5 million rupees to anyone who gave information that proved ownership of property by Ibrahim. Mr. Khairnar said that the claim that Dawood Ibrahim has no property in Bombay was wrong and that he himself had given details of such properties to the government. Meanwhile, in the budget session of the Vidhan Mandal, the issue of confiscating properties owned by the criminals involved in the Bombay bomb blast was becoming hot and the opposition parties were accusing the state government of the failure in seizing the property owned by Dawood Ibrahim and other criminals. Khairnar's talks made Sharad Pawar's difficult situation even worse. The chief minister got out of the situation in the Vidhan Mandal by saying that the bomb blast incident was being investigated by the Central Bureau of Intelligence [CBI], therefore, the state government could not do anything about it. Pawar did manage to escape opposition attacks, but also decided to teach a lesson to Khairnar. Khairnar openly attacked the chief minister and accused him of giving protection to Dawood Ibrahim and the mafia organization of Bombay. In this context, he advised the chief minister to become Valmiki [Ramayana author and reformed criminal] in a speech given in Nagpur.

The Khairnar-Pawar war began when illegal buildings owned by Dawood Ibrahim and criminals involved in the Bombay bomb blast incident were torn down. Mr. Khairnar did not hesitate at all. He attacked those buildings risking his own life. Dawood Ibrahim, who has a lot of clout in the political corridors, began to put pressure on him. Khairnar said that efforts were made to stop his campaign against illegal building during former Chief Minister Sudhakar Naik's rule also. However, Mr. Naik had refused to bow down to pressure and had not

listened to the legislators who were bought by Ibrahim. Sharad Pawar, according to Khairnar, protects these elements. Khairnar says that Dawood is the main accused in the March 93 bombs blast incidents, but he was put under heavy pressure not to destroy the illegal building in south Bombay owned by Ibrahim.

Khairnar did not focus only on the issue of tearing down illegal structures, he also became busy in exposing Sharad Pawar's connection to the mafia. Khairnar, who limited his statements to newspapers in the beginning, began to speak in public meetings openly. Mr. Khairnar claims, "I have evidence to prove the chief minister's relationship to the mafia and will present this at the right time."

Khairnar's open attacks on Sharad Pawar led to his dismissal on June 29, however, too much time had passed by then. Khairnar had made headlines at the national level. The journalists in Bombay had risen in his support. Many meetings were held in Bombay and other parts of Maharashtra during that time and many fronts were established. People like Nani Palkhiwala, Madhu Mehta, and Justice Chandra Shekhar Dharmadhikari were standing alongside Khairnar by then. Pawar's opponents in Delhi, Home Minister S.B. Chavan and Congress spokesman Gadgil, declared Khairnar's dismissal politically incorrect when they saw the support for Khairnar. Mr. Chavan ordered the CBI to confiscate properties owned by Dawood Ibrahim and other persons implicated in the Bombay bomb blasts. During this time, Sharad Pawar accused Khairnar of being a Bharatiya Janata Party [BJP] puppet, however, Gadgil rejected this even before Khairnar did.

There is a strange fight going on over Khairnar in Maharashtra these days. Sharad Pawar claims now that Dubai's criminal Dawood Ibrahim is trying to kill him, while Khairnar accuses that he is protecting him. The opposition parties and dissident Congressites are taking advantage of this fight. Sharad Pawar's situation is so bad that he had to kneel down in front of Prime Minister Narasimha Rao in Delhi. There was a time when he was emerging as an alternative to Rao, now he has to bow to Rao just to save his position as the chief minister. Khairnar's campaign has shaken up the power structure in Maharashtra. This powerful anti-Pawar campaign is getting direct or indirect support from such Congress pillars as Chavan, Gadgil, Antulay, and Vilas Rao Deshmukh. The elections in Maharashtra are scheduled to take place in November 1994. The possibility that the Congress might lose in Maharashtra because of Khairnar seems to become stronger daily. In addition, there was a sensational sex scandal in a Maharashtra's city, Jalgaon, in which local Congress leaders were involved. This has made Sharad's and Congress's situation even worse.

Campaign for Justice

94AS0418B Jaipur RAJASTHAN PATRIKA in Hindi
27 Jul 94 p 6

[Article by A. G. Nurani: "Politics, Justice, and Khairnar's Campaign"]

[Text] Whenever discussing a public issue, one should keep in mind Oscar Wilde's quote, "Truth is pure, but never simple," in mind. The opposing issues of public interest should always be balanced. This is different than finding the truth in the light of contradictory facts. For example, freedom of expression in the public interest. At the same time, protecting someone's honor from baseless slander is also in the public interest. A person working in public services such as a municipal committee, government, or in the military, must be very controlled and disciplined to protect the public interest. Unfortunately, people tend to go with the flow and do not debate a specific point in a way that could differentiate between various issues. This is clarified by the situation created by the statements issued by G. R. Khairnar. Khairnar was a commissioner in the Bombay Municipal Corporation. He was suspended and is being investigated. His suspension was challenged and since it is being considered by the Bombay High Court, it would be better not to comment on the legal aspects of the suspension. However, public debates can be held on appropriate and broad issues. Actually, Khairnar is promoting this debate by issuing statements himself.

Many aspects related to this issue are not clear. One cannot question Khairnar's honesty as a person and as a government employee. Similarly, V.P. Singh cannot be accused of dishonesty as a person or a politician. He cannot be corrupted as a person. Still, he cannot escape the accusation that he was not politically honest when he raised the Mandal issue and the way he promoted it. There are two other differences about the Khairnar issue. First, there is the question of discipline for being a civil servant which is a question of public interest. The second is of exposing corruption rampant within the government. The second is not of any lesser importance. The difference that exists between someone who is talking generally and someone who starts a campaign against something inappropriate exists here also. No one has looked at this difference in the whole Khairnar issue. When a person sees something wrong or grossly irregular, he points to it, but those in power usually either suppress it or deny it. However, when another person or official breaks his silence after being disgusted with such actions, he breaks the limitations of rules and action. He exposes serious mistakes in front of the people or tells of these to such officials who are responsible for protecting ethics. The people excuse the transgression of rules seeing the seriousness of the wrong actions. This is the difference between one who gives hints and one who starts a campaign. The campaigner has a wide area for attacks and he goes to the public to expose those aspects. He makes speeches and gives interviews to the newspapers in order to get public support against the people in power. The person leading a campaign attacks the system while the person who just informs becomes quiet after giving the information. A government official who hints about serious problems can be pardoned for breaking the law, however, a government official who starts a campaign cannot be excused.

Khairnar's Campaign

The facts available show that Khairnar is acting like those who start a campaign, and not like one who just points to the problem. He did give some hints in the beginning, though. He had contradicted Sharad Pawar's statement saying that Dawood Ibrahim had no property in Bombay. Khairnar's action was appropriate, however, the method he used did hurt. Khairnar made a lot of progress after that. Pawar's government should be condemned for some of its actions and it is imperative that its flaws and shortcomings be made public. Khairnar's campaign was praised by the people because they had suspected Pawar's government and this government was not much respected. Pawar is himself responsible for this. Actually, all this has resulted from Sheshan's efforts. In the present situation when politicians are not much respected and a government official such as Chief Election Commissioner T.N. Sheshan goes out to satisfy his ego and makes noises, even the Supreme Court has to issue orders to stop him. Otherwise, the limits of propriety would be broken. A politician never misses taking advantage of an opportunity. Pawar's actions as well as those of his opponents within the Congress (I) are known to all. Home Minister Shankar Rao Chavan continues with his actions and Congress (I) spokesman Vithal Gadgil also maintains his movements. In this context, we cannot dismiss the political ramifications of the Khairnar debate. This situation was developing for about a year. However, the argument reached its apex on 26 June when Khairnar declared open war against the chief minister in Aurangabad. A correspondent present at that time wrote that Khairnar was prepared to present proof supporting his allegations in a court. His disagreement with Pawar before was limited to Dawood Ibrahim's property. He expanded his sphere of accusations and has included other crooked actions of the chief minister. Khairnar said that Pawar was the most corrupt chief minister. His statement is purely political. On 28 June, Sharad Kale, a municipal corporation commissioner, suspended Khairnar. Khairnar said in a press interview given the next day, "Sharad Pawar is a very corrupt person. He has ties to the crime world. Instead of saving the country, he is trying to sell it. Pawar is responsible for the problems faced by the people, their exploitation, suppression, and the atmosphere of fear." Khairnar's language did not just point to corruption, it is more bitter than that used by those who campaign against corruption. This kind of language is used by an unscrupulous and intolerant person and is irresponsible since it is meaningless. Khairnar gave a speech in a public meeting in Bombay on 30 June and called municipal commissioner Sharad Kale a slave of the chief minister. His campaign is at full swing now. He has gotten endorsement from prominent lawyer Nani Palkhiwala. He wrote in an article published on 3 July, "Khairnar would not have influenced public opinion the way he has now if he had resigned. He would have been one of the hundreds of thousands of people who want to

expose the problems of the people caused by the criminals." It is extremely painful that a prominent lawyer like Palkhiwala did not pay attention to these issues.

Entry of Politicians

The politicians joined this issue on 3 July when V. N. Gadgil declared Khairnar's dismissal inappropriate from a political perspective. Later, Chavan said that Pawar should respond to the accusations that Khairnar had levied against him. The question arises: Will Chavan use this principle on central ministers also and give similar freedom to central government officials? We cannot believe that Chavan and Gadgil said such things before they had assurance of support from Rao, the Congress (I) president and the prime minister. When Pawar met with the prime minister, he asked him for sympathy, which was given. Narasimha Rao had achieved his goal. Pawar had boycotted the Congress convention held in Delhi a month earlier. However, he had to present himself in the prime minister's court only a month later. He will not be removed from his office as the Congress (I) needs him. However, he will not play any decisive role in distributing the party tickets for the vidhan sabha elections to be held next March. He will remain the chief minister, but the Center will have political control over him. The present situation has ruined Pawar's plans to maintain his independence. The Khairnar campaign has influenced opinions of the people and Pawar's mistakes are to blame for that. Khairnar started to speak more fearlessly on 4 July. In Kohlapur, he accused Pawar of starting the December 1992 riots in Bombay to remove Sudhakar Rao Naik, then chief minister. He became the chief minister himself. It is important to mention here that Khairnar was one of the people that the riots investigation commission had interviewed. He did not make this accusation at that time.

A week after the Kohlapur statement he said, "I can prove that Pawar was not involved just in the riots; he was also involved in the 12 March 1993 Bombay bomb blasts. When RDX [explosive material] was being smuggled into our country, he was the defense minister." On 10 July, Khairnar said that he did not have to prove his allegations against Pawar. "I have already submitted documents. Khairnar's statements are proof enough." There is a reason behind such an arrogant statement. Gandhian leader Anna Hazare, who was honored a day earlier, had asked Khairnar to present proof in support of his allegations or the Hazare campaign against corruption in which Khairnar had joined would lose direction. He said, "I am planning to sit down and discuss this. I will tell Khairnar that if he continued to talk without any proof, I will not support him." No proof has been presented yet.

Pawar Should Make His Promise Good

What can we say to Pawar? He promised on 8 July that he was going to issue a "white paper" to give facts about the accusations levied against him. He must make his

promise good. In addition, why does not he amend the state's rules about public appointments? He should remove the related clause and include the chief minister in this sphere. There is no forerunner of Khairnar's campaign. However there was an incident of exposing corruption in Britain a decade ago. Margaret Thatcher's government had drowned an Argentinean ship during the Falkland war and had lied about it. Clive Ponting, a defense ministry official, had given documents that exposed the government lies to Labour Party Parliament Member Tom Dolyell. A case was registered against Ponting under state secrets act. The jury refused to accept the judge's point that the words "state's interests" in the law meant government's interests. The government's interests sometimes are different than the country's and people's interests. However, Ponting lost his job. It would be appropriate for Khairnar to present his proof. He has gone too far and there is no return. The people are watching the future actions of his campaign.

Many Battles to Fight

94As0418C Varanasi AJ in Hindi 25 Jul 94 p 6

[Article by Shashi Shekhar: "The Increasing Number of Battles Ahead"]

[Text] Sharad Pawar is getting trapped. It appears that Khairnar's campaign is influencing even more people now. Sadashiv Rao Tinaikar, former Bombay Municipal Corporation commissioner, has also taken the stand against him. In a very crowded press conference in Bombay, he accused Pawar of having ties to the Bombay Mafia and presented some proof. There are no two opinions that as this campaign keeps getting stronger, Narasimha Rao who follows the Dhritarashtra policy line [indecisive] might take some strong action.

It is true that there is no one in the Congress (I) who is able to talk or hear about corruption. The Harshad Mehta attack on Narasimha Rao may have proved a blank shot, however, this put a question mark on the whole system which helps unmask the whole affair. This important question is not unknown now. Many questions about his truthfulness were raised even when Mehta had first told the reporters of his accusation. A major question in this swarm of questions was why was this accusation levied against Rao when never in history did anyone dare to accuse a prime minister directly? The reason for this is clear. Rao is vulnerable somewhere and this vulnerability can be brought to light by accusing him. Harshad Mehta knew this truth very well.

This is not the case about Pawar. When Govind Raje Khairnar raised his voice against him he was still a civil servant. A mid-level government official gathers such courage only when he has truth behind him with its full strength. Pawar had tried to get out of it by calling him crazy. The words may have lost their effect in this era, however, they still have enough power of impact that can shake up anyone. Khairnar has shaken up not only Pawar but also those who are acting ignorant of this dirty

side of administration. The Rip Van Winkle kind of sleep that the people have been sleeping is what has given such power to the politicians. Khairnar has shaken up this deep slumber and brought awareness of the unlimited corrupt desires of the politicians. In the beginning Anna Hazare and a large number of social reformers were with him, however, his strongest support comes from the hundreds of thousands of people who are strangled by this system and find themselves helpless.

Ribero, the veteran and respected bureaucrat, believes that this war is taking a wrong turn. Perhaps he is correct. However, he should not forget that the leprosy of corruption has become so common in this society that we do not even notice it. If this was not the case then Narasimha Rao would not have been accused of taking a Rs. 10 million bribe, and he would not have waited for the accusation to die its natural death quietly. Had the people put pressure on him, he would have been forced to leave his position until he was declared innocent by an appropriate agency. Imagine such an accusation levied against the prime minister of United States, Britain, or Japan! They definitely would have to resign. However, Rao remained peaceful. He knew that a ceremonial hue and cry would be raised in the Parliament and in the streets, followed by calm.

Even his opponents within the Congress (I) did not have enough moral courage to force their leader to take an exemplary step for the party's interest. Rao's main opponent Arjun Singh himself was himself found guilty by the High Court in the Churhat Lottery case. He is running the shop of his politics at the mercy of the Supreme Court now. The Bombay High Court has also given a decision against Pawar in a land-occupancy case. He is also at the mercy of the Supreme Court. Be it Railway Minister Jaffar Sharif or another respected minister, all of them have blackened faces. Who would have borne the burden of opposing Rao in such situation? It is possible that Pawar was influenced by this incident and thought that Khairnar's voice would be suppressed with time. However, it did not happen this time. People, tired of corruption, are continuously putting pressure on the government. Khairnar had started alone on his campaign, but other people kept joining him. Now he is leading a huge caravan.

Tinaikar's joining this campaign and supporting Khairnar's allegations by some preliminary proofs show that the siege around Pawar is becoming stronger. We should not forget here that some professional experts on logic had tried to cheapen this campaign by saying that Khairnar was not fighting the system but a specific person. Is this war against a specific person? Pawar is not an unknown man standing in the street. He is the chief minister of an important state in this country and is a part of the system that puts him beside Rao and Arjun Singh. It is clear that we should not try to depreciate Khairnar's struggle by using some insignificant reasons. The importance of this campaign has increased with

Tinaikar's entry. How wonderful it would be if the bureaucrats all over the nation recognize this ideal and follow it!

I am positive that this will happen in the near future. The politics have strangled the average person in this country so much that he is suffocating. It appears that politics did not emerge from the social system; the society is complementing politics. It is a known fact that when it becomes to dark to see, humans find light within themselves. That is what Khairnar did and that is what Tinaikar is doing now. Many more people will join this war between truth and falsehood. This is not a baseless delusion, but a truth which cannot be stopped from realizing itself.

The election will be held in Maharashtra in November and the Congress (I) will also participate in it. The Congress camp naturally is worried by this anti-Pawar campaign. Rao is protecting him so far. It is strange that the reasons given for protecting him are those that encourage corruption! They say that only Pawar is capable to steering the party's election boat in Maharashtra, because he has the means to collect money for winning the election. Who contributes to the political parties for elections? The same people who need the cooperation of politicians for running their illegal trades. This is a shameless admission by the Congress High Command that Pawar is closely related to such people and he can collect a lot of money. However, in this arena of democracy, may people who were considered very weak financially have won some bouts. True, resources and manpower are considered important in elections now, however, the average voter still has some interests. This average voter is going against the great boat captain under the leadership of Khairnar, Tinaikar, Anna Hazare and Ribero.

As mentioned earlier, there is a tumult within the Congress (I) over this issue. That is why the Maharashtra State Congress Committee has suspended Bhai Thakur and Pappu Klanani from membership of the party. Both these strong persons are considered to be close to Pawar. Khairnar also has alleged that Pawar has amassed a lot of wealth through them. Now that they are suspended, it clearly means that the Congress (I) is worried about improving its image. Therefore, we can say that this worry can push Pawar aside if the campaign gets stronger.

If this happens, obviously people like Khairnar and Tinaikar will win. However, this victory will not be the final victory. This war to change the system with the cooperation of the people should continue.

Defense of Taslima Nasreen Seen 'Secular' Necessity

94AS0421A New Delhi JANSATTA in Hindi 4 Aug 94
p 4

[Article by Chetan Kranti: "Why it is Necessary to Save Taslima"]

[Text] It is difficult to say which news bulletin will have the news about the murder of Bangladesh's well-known writer by fundamentalists. Every person with a conscience and those who consider the historical achievements glorious are holding their breath and waiting for Taslima a to come out of the cage she has been put in. We do not know when the blind religious fanatics will crush her creative mind in their fingers.

If we look closely, it is not simply the question of the life of a writer. There is a group (that is made up of educated people) that considers Taslima's desire to stay alive as cowardice. This is the product of deranged minds with a mentality that glorifies death and which equates any kind of stupid death with martyrdom. They are waiting for an incident that could provide them with the opportunity to become angry and sad at the same time. It is true that Galileo, Socrates, and Christ gave their lives for truth, however, we do not have the fine details of how they lost their lives as we have about Taslima Nasreen or Salman Rushdie. These are our modern-day tragedies. Perhaps, that is why the halo around these two seems to be of lower quality.

How strange it is that we are studying Shoemaker-Levy on on hand and are tolerating the savage barbaric mentality of narrow-minded groups on the other. The issue is clearly between scientific knowledge of history against narrow mentality. If a group makes its distinctive racial or religious identity the basis for considering the genuine and normal attitudes of other social systems in the world to be inferior and also uses all the beneficial amenities resulting from that system, is not it a legitimate action to put that group in its proper place?

No one has forgotten the unity of the world communities against Saddam Hussain's regional autocracy. Is not such unity possible to support specific convictions? Is it difficult to protect a democratic person in the present world where no country can survive if it neglects the rest of the world? Perhaps not. However, we do not consider the great ideals of democracy such as equality and freedom to be mere word play, and believe in implementing them at any cost. If we listen to any radio program broadcasted by Pakistan or Bangladesh, we can get a good idea of how the major governmental system in the world—democracy—and its great human ideals are ridiculed. They talk in an unintelligible language. They call the whole world their enemy and say that the whole world is conspiring against them because the world is threatened by their [Muslims] becoming the only omnipotent leadership. They have some delusions which they do not want to disappear at any cost. Yet they never miss the opportunity to get any thing—from wheat to war planes—from their enemies. What kind of shamelessness is this and why is it Maintained?

Are the principles of freedom of thought and belief and equal rights only for those people and groups that adopt them on their own? Do those that always curse these ideals have the full freedom to do whatever they want?

What does this pitiful joke mean? Pakistan has been exporting discord and instability to India for a long time, and the European nations that have created democracy and the above-mentioned democratic principles have ignored all this saying that this is a problem between India and Pakistan. They always use the Shimla Agreement as bridge for escape. Why? Has the European mind become so barren that it cannot think of a new way to resolve an issue? Its strength is seen only when agreements like GATT are to be signed. What magic this is that the United States is a friend of India and Pakistan both? Why is that Pakistan that looks at every aspect of American and European culture with hatred also receives aid from them? The reason is clear and that points to the double standards of Europe and the United States of America. They are the foot soldiers of capitalism and do not pay attention to anything that is not aimed at making a profit. Even their democratic ideals are based on this goal. Therefore, if we think that these democratic countries will unite to protect a writer (who supports democratic ideals first and her human body afterwards) like they did against Saddam Hussein's high-handedness, then we are wrong. The source of inspiration in that case was their trade interests. They had staged the drama of democratic ideals to protect those interests.

The situation is different here. Taking Taslima Nasreen's side openly means buying enmity of Islamic countries and losing the markets for which the GATT was signed. This is the empire of capitalism which has the lowly desire of selling even human souls. Their humane organizations roam the world and see injustice and inhuman deeds being committed only in Asian countries and then they have the whole world read their reports so that the Asian nations can never rise from above the moral whirlpool of this guilt. Someone should ask if these reports affect the relations between developing and developed countries. If they have the power, cannot they use some other means to show it?

In this situation, there seems to be no alternative for the Asian community but to develop self-dependence. This is an unavoidable and challenging task. One challenge is cultural homogeneity. India, which is the most powerful nation in Asia is perhaps the most capable country for this challenge—both in positive and negative senses. This nation with its different religions, castes, and geography is willing to remain united in the present times because the demands of life and progress as well as our traditional weakness have sapped our courage to take risks. The people of this country are aware of the fact that some power-hungry persons are trying to establish parallel power bases, still they do not relinquish the desire for cooperation because their own priority is guarantee of economic security. This is their hope that if we have solid economy, then the fight against separatists will be limited to a handful of conspirators, which can be managed easily.

However, they are disappointed and this disappointment was caused by the confusion which we had allowed

to grow since 1947. We have allowed suspicions to flourish for a long time in every field be it economic-industrialist or religious-social. We thought that the sermons given by sants and gurus [Religious figures] and slogans raised by leaders could be a panacea for every malady. Our concept of religious freedom and secularism is also borne out by this confused mentality. The result of religious freedom is that it did not take much time for religion to become a political weapon. We had already seen the results of mixing politics with religion when we got our independence. Still, we considered tradition to be a synonym of culture (and history) and continued to give opportunity to religion to be a center of power. Religion is openly interfering in our government, and since politics have become a form of free enterprise instead of being a social system, every group such has started agitating based on differences of caste, language, and ethnicity as well as religion. We have to means to stop this race.

This is the result of giving open freedom to religion and casteism in a country that was still learning the ABC's of democracy. Can our belief that a country has no religion answer the question whether the citizens of that country should have a specific religion? This is the contradiction that forces all secular groups to be silent when Lal Krishna Advani asks them for an outline of a structure for this nation. It is true that secular intellectuals and politicians have nothing but arguments to pacify the minorities. Imperialism is ready to victimize this country in a new way now. Do the secularists have a parallel and potent philosophy which can put a new life in the minds of one billion uncultured and thoughtless people? How did lack of culture and thought emerge? We considered the remains of history to be cultural and protected them and continued with the fatal experiment of protecting a fused culture. We did not understand the fact that the incidents in history cannot be cultural. Culture is the philosophy of life of a period and people think about styles and manners only after taking care of their stomachs. We neither provided enough food to fill ourselves nor did we reach a level of cultural awareness. We spent more than half of our energies trying to spread factional, castiest, linguistic, and regional harmony. What is religion? It is a specific style of thinking and living. Is not a scientific method of living and thinking a religion into itself? Could not we have spent the energy that we wasted in spreading the meaningless slogan of "Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, and Christians are brothers" on accepting science as a religion? This prattle about unity still continues and is as useless as it was 40-45 years ago.

Today, as a secular nation it is our duty to save Taslima Nasreen's life at any cost. It does not matter if our relations with Bangladesh are strained, because it would be a solid step toward that secularism which we actually need. It is possible that some people living in India might not like it. This will also clarify their character as to how secular are they in this secular nation. At the same time, the people of this country who do not consider religion to

be the main identification of a person regardless of his or her birth, will come out openly in support of Taslima. It should be remembered that it is important that we protect Taslima and her philosophy respectfully, because it is essential that we protect the honor of the people of Asian nations.

State Assembly Elections Set for 1 Jan-31 Mar

94AS0430A Bombay *THE TIMES OF INDIA*
in English 22 Jul 94 p 1

[Names as published]

[Text] United News of India, Bombay, July 21—The chief election commissioner, Mr T. N. Seshan, today said that elections to the Maharashtra legislative assembly would be held between January 1 and March 31, 1995, along with states of Gujarat, Bihar, Orissa, Arunachal Pradesh and Manipur.

Speaking at a public forum here, Mr Seshan said the elections to Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Goa and Sikkim state assemblies would be held before December 31.

He said that the process of issuing identity cards after revising electoral rolls would begin on September 1 and be completed by December 31. "We are not going to insist on ID cards for the elections to be completed before December. However, ID cards would be issued to all voters in the subsequent elections," he said.

The Maharashtra state legislature had allocated grants of Rs [Rupees] 85 crores for the purpose of issuing ID cards to voters, he said, quipping that elections to the state assemblies were on the cards while one or two more states "are promising to give us more work".

Taking a hardline, Mr Seshan said: "We will not tolerate intimidation of poor, women and Dalits." He offered videographic evidence to show that a large number of women had voted in the just concluded elections and by-elections.

Further the ballot boxes were mixed and despite objections from candidates of political parties, it was virtually impossible to identify how the electorate had voted in a particular place to prevent recrimination and untoward incidents.

He said that the appointment of Income Tax commissioners to audit expenditure in the elections saw a drop in expenditure on polls by political parties by a factor of ten. On the low turnout, like the one witnessed in Baranati, he said it could be due to several factors, including the oppressive heat.

However, the turnout in some states was as high as 80 percent, which accounting for the ten percent people who did not exercise their franchise and another ten percent bogus voters on the list, was a commendable cent [as published] percent voting, he argued.

The election commission has sufficient machinery to hold simultaneous polls throughout the country in a single day, Mr Seshan announced in the city today.

He was speaking at a seminar on the "formulation of election reforms" held at SNDT [expansion not given] University. The event was organised by the "Citizens For National Consensus," a non-political organisation.

Mr Seshan observed that everything necessary for conducting a countrywide election was at hand "from sealing wax to hurricane lamps to arrangements for the transport of ballot-boxes." The only hindrance, he claimed, was posed by candidates who demanded greater security as they had "lost faith" in their own bodyguards.

"I announce from the rooftops that the election commission with its 25 chief election officers in various states and six in the Union territories can conduct simultaneous elections at 800,000 polling booths and in a single day," the CEC [Chief Election Commissioner] triumphantly reiterated.

Mr Seshan arrived here this morning to meet the chief election officers of Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Gujarat and Goa reportedly to discuss the "national awareness campaign" to be launched on Independence Day.

In a speech replete with similes, he compared elections in a democracy to a toilet, "which if not kept clean rapidly becomes dirty".

Government Acts in Response to Sugar Scandal

Agreement Revised

94AS0435A Bombay *THE TIMES OF INDIA*
in English 16 Jul 94 p 1

[Article by Prakash Joshi: "Government Revise Agreement on Sugar Deal"; names as published]

[Text] Bombay, July 15. The Union government has ultimately decided to revise the agreements to provide bankers acceptance credit facility at a lower rate of interest for importing sugar worth Rs [Rupees] 1,400 crores.

The original agreements signed by the Minerals and Metals Trading Corporation (MMTC) and State Trading Corporation (STC) with a higher rate of interest against letters of credit would have incurred a loss to the tune of Rs 100 crores.

According to information reaching here, the issue of loss to the government due to higher rate of interest on letter of credit was discussed by the secretary to the food department, Mr S.C. Sen, the joint secretary (sugar), Mr S.K. Tripathi and the managing director of the Food Corporation of India, Mr A.V. Gokaka, with the cabinet secretary, Mr Zafar Saifullah.

With the import of sugar at a higher price taking a political turn, the decision to remove other anomalies in

the original contract has been taken by the Union government to avoid further criticism of the decision.

According to the original agreement, the suppliers credit for six months available at a lower rate of 4.5 percent was not availed. Instead, cash credit from the local sources at the higher rate of 16.5 percent were availed by the importing agencies.

The anomaly was detected by the FCI (Food Corporation of India) director, Mr K.V. Gidwania, who wrote a letter to the FCI director and the cabinet secretary asking them to take immediate steps to save Rs 100 crores.

The decision to make bankers' credit available to the importers at the rate of 4.5 percent will reduce the burden on the exchequer by Rs 100 crores. According to informed sources, the decision has been conveyed to the importing agencies—the STC (State Trading Corporation) and MMTC (Minerals and Metals Trading Corporation).

Probe Ordered

94AS0435B Calcutta *THE STATESMAN* in English
18 Jul 94 p 1

[Article: "PM Asks Former CAG To Probe Sugar Muddle"; names as published]

[Text] New Delhi, July 17.—The Prime Minister [PM] today ordered a preliminary administrative inquiry into the sugar scandal. It will be conducted by the former Comptroller and Auditor-General [CAG], Mr Gian Prakash, who has been assigned to fix *prima facie* responsibility for the lapses, if any, in dealing with the situation arising out of the shortage over the past few months.

Mr Narasimha Rao's executive order confers Mr Prakash with powers to summon all documents from the departments, Ministries and organizations involved. He will also question officials and non-official functionaries connected with the imports.

He will be required to submit his report within a month to the Prime Minister.

According to the terms of the inquiry, the former CAG will examine and report on:

- The steps taken by the departments, organizations and institutions concerned in accurately forecasting the production and demand of sugar during the sugar year 1993-94.
- The adequacy of the measures taken by them to deal with the situation after the shortage of sugar during the season was identified.
- The steps taken to facilitate and maintain contacts and monitor details of contracting by private traders for importing sugar after the imports were placed on the Open General Licence.

—The adequacy of contingency planning to deal with (a) availability, (b) proper supplies through the Public Distribution System, (c) speculative increase in the retail price of sugar and (d) cooperation of the sugar industry.

According to the order, the inquiry will also identify the steps that are essential to cut down what it calls the "response time" in a developing situation to prevent such a crisis from recurring.

PTI and UNI add: The controversy had arisen when the Food Minister, Mr Kalpnath Rai, had cancelled on May 19 the tender inquiries floated by the Food Corporation of India. He had accused the "top bureaucracy" of taking the "hasty decision" in his absence, when he was on a tour of his constituency.

Explaining why the Prime Minister did not order an inquiry earlier, official sources said today that his main concern over the past few months was to ensure the availability of sugar by gearing up the agencies to build up stocks. According to a senior official, Mr Rao has now ordered the probe since the country has to an extent got over the crisis.

Welcoming the order, Mr Kalpnath Rai said: "In a war between falsehood and truth, truth will ultimately triumph. I am answerable to the people of India, the Parliament, the Public Accounts Committee and the Constitution. And as a colleague of the Prime Minister, I must discharge my duties faithfully and with all sincerity."

Opposition parties have welcomed the move. The CPI(M) [Communist Party of India-Marxist] general secretary, Mr Harkishan Singh Surjeet, said: "It is a welcome step, though a belated one." He added that the Centre had failed to take action on earlier inquiries by the CAG.

The CPI [Communist Party of India] leader, Mr M. Farooqui, supported today's order, but said that the party had been demanding a parliamentary probe into the sugar muddle.

Mrs Sushma Swaraj of the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] said the inquiry was "long overdue and a welcome one."

BJP Shifts Stand Away From VHP

94AS0436A Bombay *THE TIMES OF INDIA*
in English 20 Jul 94 p 9

[Article by R.C. Srivastava: "BJP Moves Away From VHP"; names as published]

[Text] Lucknow, July 19.—The just concluded three-day visit to U.P. by the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] president, Mr L.K. Advani, reveals a major shift in the party's stand on the construction of the Ram temple and his party's willingness to distance itself from Hindu fundamentalists dominating the Vishwa Hindu Parishad [VHP].

The encouraging turn-out of people at public meetings he addressed soon after launching his party's Bharat Parikrama programme at Varanasi and later in Gorakhpur and Gonda prompted him to claim in Lucknow, before boarding the train for New Delhi last night, that the BJP would wrest power from the Samajwadi Party-Bahujan Samaj Party [SP-BSP] combine whenever elections were held next.

Although chants of "Jai Sri Ram" rent the air at his public meetings, the tone and tenor of Mr Advani's speeches appeared devoid of the religious fervour which used to be dominant during the course of his Somnath to Ayodhya Rath Yatra in September-October 1990. Nor was there any ambiguity as he touched sensitive issues like the Ram temple.

In Varanasi, the traditional chant of "Har-Har Mahadev" and "Jai Sri Ram" by enthusiasts were raised, but their intensity was no match to the one witnessed in December 1992 when Mr Advani had addressed a meeting while leaving for Ayodhya.

The thrust of Mr Advani's address at press conferences and public meetings was on giving precedence to Hindutva over the Ram temple issue, but with a difference. Unlike the past, Mr Advani this time seemed to be more cautious and less confrontationist towards the Centre.

Referring to his party's concept of "cultural nationalism," he described the Ram temple at the disputed site in Ayodhya as a symbol of national identity and cultural heritage.

But the BJP leader minced no words in saying that the vast majority of the people were interested in the temple's construction at the place where the deity of Ram Lalla was placed at present. He even expressed his willingness to persuade the Sangh parivar not to insist on the construction by any particular agency (the Ram Janambhoomi Nyas or the VHP proposed trust of sadhus) provided the Prime Minister, Mr P.V. Narasimha Rao, clarified that the temple would be constructed at the site where the garbh griha exists and that the Babri Masjid would be built outside the panch kosi parikrama area.

Thus, Mr Advani appears to have hinted at a major shift in the BJP's earlier stance that the Ram temple would be constructed only by the Ram Janambhoomi Nyas. But in the process, he made an attempt to get a categorical statement from Mr Rao regarding the site of both the temple and the mosque.

Not only this, he also distanced himself from the VHP by saying that the Gyanvapi Mosque "is not on the BJP's agenda." The VHP, it may be recalled, has been demanding restoration of possession of the Gyanvapi Mosque in Varanasi to the Hindus.

Though the objective of the Bharat Parikrama is to apprise the people of the dangers the country faces

following the "failure of the Centre" to deal with disruptionist forces in Kashmir and mobilise public opinion against the government, Mr Advani also exhorted party workers to highlight the people's problems in their respective areas in the state.

In this regard, he even told the audience at public meetings that the SP-BSP government had failed to check atrocities on Dalits and would not last long.

Mr Advani said that the opportunistic alliance between the BSP supremo, Mr Kanshi Ram, and the SP leader, Mr Mulayam Singh Yadav, had already shown signs of cracking because of the distrust between the coalition partners. The Mulayam ministry was caught in a cleft stick. Had it not been so, the chief minister would not have swallowed the insults heaped on him by Mr Kanshi Ram at the BSP rally in Lucknow on July 10.

It was strange that Mr Yadav, who claimed to be a messiah of the Muslims, regarded being called "Maulana Mulayam" a bigger abuse than the names given to him by his political ally in public, Mr Advani said.

BJP Urged To Revive Shyam Mukherjee's Ideology

94AS0419A Varanasi AJ in Hindi 27 Jul 94 p 6

[Article by Balraj Madhok: "Is BJP Really Returning to Dr Mukherjee's Path?"]

[Text] After a few years of meandering and of calling [Mahatma] Gandhi and Jayaprakash Narayan their sources of inspiration, the Bharatiya Janata Party [BJP] is thinking of Bharatiya Jana Sangh founder Dr. Shyamaprasad Mukherjee in accordance with the saying, "When the images give trouble, one remembers God." Now it is ostentatiously celebrating as Mukherjee Fortnight the period between June 23, the day of his immolation, and July 6, his birthday. This year it has organized civil disobedience in Jammu during this fortnight on the issue of Doda District being declared a disturbed area and being turned over to the army. But have BJP's helmsmen really returned to Dr. Mukherjee's path or do they really want to?

Dr. Mukherjee was a serene man of principles and a leader firmly committed to a Hindu nation and Hindutva [Hindu-ness embodied in Indian culture]. These were the center of his thought and his faith. He was a great intellectual, and he had made these the basis of his thought after deep consideration, study and reflection. For this reason he urged that India, or Hindustan, be outlined clearly in the Bharatiya Jana Sangh manifesto. This was actually done, but due to pressure from some Sangh thinkers this description was removed from the manifesto. This greatly saddened Dr. Mukherjee. He overcame this shortcoming with a proposal during Jan Sangh's first convention held in Kanpur in the end of 1952. This proposal, also called the "Indianization"

proposal, was passed unanimously in the convention and became a part of the fundamental philosophy of the Bharatiya Jana Sangh.

In the proposal the following four elements were especially emphasized in order to clarify the national character of India. Education must be consonant with national culture and tradition. Along with the Upanishads, Shrimad Bhagvad Gita, Ramayana, Mahabharata, study of the literature of modern Indian languages as well as of literary figures who have made important contributions to keeping Indian culture alive, must all be a necessary part of study and education.

Festivals such as Rakshabandhan, Vijayadashmi, Deepavali and Holi must be declared national festivals, and celebrated as such. The Sanskrit language must be resurrected and its knowledge made compulsory for the students of this education system. Simultaneously the Devanagri script must be promoted as the common script of all the nation's languages and made popular. Indian history must be rewritten in a way that this becomes the history of the Indian nation, not merely that of foreign attackers and rulers.

Dr. Mukherjee knew that independence of thought and diversity based on difference of opinion separates the Indian Hindu society from religious societies based on Islam or Christianity. Hindu society cannot be carved into a rigid framework like them. Therefore Hindu unity can take the form of a common platform on the basis of similar thinking, similar life values and similar goals, but not that of a group cast in the same mold.

Dr. Mukherjee's thinking with respect to Kashmir was also very clear. He had asked Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru why the constitution that was applicable and appropriate for the entire country was not appropriate for Kashmir. Pundit Nehru did not have an answer. He only wrote in reply that because he had promised Sheikh Abdullah a separate constitution and special status, it was not possible for him to renege on his word. In response Dr. Mukherjee wrote him in March 1953 that Sheikh Abdullah could only represent Kashmir valley. Why then was a promise made to him being imposed upon the people of Jammu and Ladakh? His clear suggestion was that Jammu and Ladakh be brought under the Indian constitution and given the same status as the rest of the country, and only the Kashmir valley need be given a special status for some time as part of India. If this suggestion made in 1953 had been accepted, today's dangerous situation in Jammu's Doda District would not have arisen, and the situation in the Kashmir Valley would also not have deteriorated.

After Kashmir's native Hindu inhabitants were expelled from the valley at sword-point, a new situation arose. Kashmiri Hindus are demanding a protected area for themselves in the southern part of Kashmir valley, and want the status of a centrally governed state for this area. Their demand cannot be ignored. Therefore an administrative reorganization in Kashmir valley has now

become mandatory. The scheme of special status can be continued in the valley excluding protected areas for Kashmiri Hindus.

Either the helmsmen of the Bharatiya Janata Party have not deeply studied Dr. Mukherjee's life and thought, or their new love for Shyam is merely a sham. The basic philosophy of the Jana Sangh, given in its first manifesto and in Dr. Mukherjee's first chairman's address, is still as relevant a solution to India's problems as it was in 1951. Now even the Congress Party and the Congress government have embraced Jana Sangh's economic thinking and foreign policy approach towards Israel; it is not clear whether the helmsmen of the Bhartiya Janata Party are genuinely ready to return to Dr. Mukherjee's path. Although along with Dr. Mukherjee they have embraced Jana Sangh's tenth chairman Pundit Dindayal Upadhyay, they have ignored other founders and leaders. The country's political conditions are rapidly changing. The Janata Party assumed many forms after 1977, but none appeared to become stable. The Janata Dal is also disintegrating. On the other hand the Samajwadi Party has been revived and the Swatantra Party is being resurrected. In this situation a resurgence of the Bharatiya Jana Sangh is also possible. The Bharatiya Janata Party, by adopting the Jana Sangh's saffron flag and identifying itself completely with the Jana Sangh's philosophy and its founders, can secure its own future and also fulfill a great need of the country. It is therefore important that the helmsmen of the Bharatiya Janata Party reflect on the purifying memory of Dr. Mukherjee, and relinquish the dual standards espoused in the name of opportunism and strategy; adopting a politics of principles and values, of which Dr. Shyam Prasad Mukherjee was the quintessence.

CPI Council Meets, Urges Kashmir Autonomy 94AS0442A Hyderabad DECCAN CHRONICLE in English 13 Jul 94 p 4

[Article: "CPI for Kashmir Autonomy"; names as published]

[Text] Nagpur, July 13 (UNI): The National Council of the Communist Party of India [CPI] has asked the Centre to take immediate steps to restore the autonomy to Jammu and Kashmir, which had been "eroded" over the years, and maintain the state's special position in the spirit of Article 370 of the Constitution.

A resolution adopted by the Council at its meeting here criticised the Centre for complicating the Kashmir situation by sending "contradictory" signals.

The resolution, released here on Wednesday, viewed the sharp reaction of the Kashmiri people on the assassination of Qazi Nisar Ahmad by pro-Pakistan elements as an important turning point in the Kashmir situation. This "comparatively" favourable situation should not be allowed to be frittered away, it said and demanded that

the Prime Minister convene an all-party meeting to discuss the question of quantum of autonomy for the strife-torn State.

The meeting of the Council, presided over by the former Kerala Chief Minister, Mr P.K. Vasudevan Nair, was of the opinion that Pakistan's Inter Services Intelligence [ISI] agency had opened a second front in Doda district for ethnic cleansing. This had led to migration from that region and the people of the region deserved to be congratulated for not allowing it to take a communal turn.

The resolution said Congress rulers were complicating the Kashmir situation by their policies, pronouncements and actions. "Contradictory" signals were being sent from the Home Ministry and the Governor of Jammu and Kashmir. There were also talks of holding Assembly elections first and then discussing the question of restoration of the eroded autonomy. This would be putting the cart before the horse, the meeting felt.

"If the Congress rulers are serious they have to begin with proper discussion for restoration of the special position of Jammu and Kashmir in the context and spirit of Article 370" of the Constitution, it said.

Papers Report Criticism of CPI

Questions From CPI-M Leader

94AS0438A Calcutta *THE STATESMAN* in English
19 Jul 94 p 5

[Article: "CPI Forgetting Tenets: Surjeet"]

[Text] New Delhi, July 18.—The relations between the Communist Party of India [CPI] and the Communist Party of India (Marxist) [CPI(M)] suffered yet another jolt today, with the CPI(M) general secretary, Mr Harkishan Singh Surjeet, accusing the CPI of deviating from the basic premises of Marxism-Leninism and losing its Marxist moorings.

This is the first time in the recent past that the senior partner of the Left Front has questioned the basic ideological premises of the CPI, thereby jeopardizing the prospects of a reunification of the two largest Communist parties of the country.

The relationship between the two parties showed signs of strain when they differed on the issue of the electoral Bills. While the CPI(M) was willing to support the proposed Constitution (83rd Amendment) Bill, the CPI opposed it, saying it was not ready to curtail the powers of the Chief Election Commissioner.

The strain that emerged on the electoral Bill issue became further enhanced when leaders of each party accused the other—through their respective party organs—of failing to put up a united show on the issue.

Mr Surjeet, reacting to the CPI general secretary, Mr Indrajit Gupta's reported statement on the merger of the

two parties—that the ball lay in the CPI(M)'s court—said: "I fail to comprehend to whom he has addressed this appeal. Mr Gupta should be aware that such unity can only be based on Marxism-Leninism and its concrete application to the conditions prevailing in our country."

Alleging that the CPI has lost its Marxist moorings, Mr Surjeet added: "Raising such issues in public, without any formal discussions at the level of the two parties, will not help this process."

Claiming that the experience of the last three decades had vindicated the CPI(M)'s understanding and stands on these subjects, Mr Surjeet said: "If Mr Indrajit Gupta and the CPI are really sincere on the issue of unity, they should review the experience of the past three decades and come forward for discussions between the two parties to arrive at a common understanding and approach, rather than go to the Press."

Meanwhile, Mr Gupta, addressing a political convention of the CPI at Raipur yesterday, said the split in the Communist Party 30 years ago had harmed people at large, adds UNI (United News of India).

Bhattacharya Comments

94AS0438B Madras *THE HINDU* in English 18 Jul 94
p 15

[Article: "CPI Losing Ground, Says Party Leader"]

[Text] Calcutta, July 17.—Mr. Nandagopal Bhattacharya, a prominent CPI [Communist Party of India] leader, says his party is now way behind the other conductor of the movement, the Communist Party of India (Marxist) [CPI(M)]. Not only this. Some CPI leaders, he says, are indulging in corruption while some have got hooked on to the glamour of Parliamentary politics.

Needless to say, Mr. Bhattacharya's observation touched off a debate in CPI's just-concluded National Council meeting held in Nagpur. Mr. Bhattacharya, secretary of the Communist Party of India (CPI)'s West Bengal Council, says CPI(M) has now taken the lead while CPI has steadily lost its grip on the Indian Communist movement.

In a letter to Mr. Indrajit Gupta, the CPI general-secretary, Mr. Bhattacharya says it is a pity that CPI which once had a strong presence in most of the Indian States, is now hardly considered a force. "Everybody now admits that CPI is no longer a bigger party than the CPI(M) in the all India sphere also."

According to Mr. Bhattacharya, CPI has even lost its position in the international sphere where the CPI(M) enjoys greater acceptability. "It is a bigger and active party in the eyes of foreign communist parties." In his view, CPI has lost its pride since 1969. The letter was circulated among the National Council members.

Mr. Bhattacharya asks the CPI leadership to identify the reasons behind CPI's gradual shrinkage across the country as, otherwise, the future will be bleak. "Why are we getting smaller day by day? Why have our mass organisations turned into paper ones?"

According to him, CPI has suffered severe dilution in Bihar where Leftist groupings like the Indian People's Front [IPF] have grown in stature. In several States, senior CPI leaders have left the party as a result of which a setback has taken place, he said.

Mr. Bhattacharya also charges the leadership with lack of ideological conviction. The party, he says, is devoid of a focus. By contrast, the CPI(M) is more alert and quick to react to important issues. "Class struggle, revolution, struggle against imperialism are seldom uttered in the party meetings," he says.

Competitive Politics

The participation in Parliamentary politics has exposed the Party to the trappings of power, he says, adding that "becoming an MLA [member of Legislative Assembly] and MP [member of Parliament] is lucrative for various benefits, income, power and other facilities. "CPI leaders and workers are now mired in competitive politics as a result of which they forget their responsibilities to the people," he says.

In the letter he also refers to the critical issues of the communist unity in India and politics of casteism in the CPI. On the first count, he says the CPI(M) has hijacked the original CPI slogan for communist unity and is going ahead with a unity offensive. The CPI is failing to respond positively to the call for unity, he comments. On the second count, he says, many CPI State units are riven with casteism. "It is really unfortunate."

Mr. Bhattacharya calls for an intra-party discussion for the sake of the future at the party congress scheduled for March-April, 1995.

Mishra Interviewed on Possible Congress Split in Bihar

94AS0421B New Delhi JANSATTA in Hindi 1 Aug 94
pp 1, 10

[Jagannath Mishra Interviewed by Kumar Anand: "Change of Leadership Is Suicide, Congress Unity Would Break"]

[Excerpt] New Delhi, 31 July—Dr. Jagannath Mishra, former chief minister and Rajya Sabha member, has called Bihar Congress efforts to reunite suicidal. He says that removing Mohammed Hidayatullah Khan as Congress vice president "will break up Congress unity and demoralize Congress members." P.V. Narasimha Rao, Congress president, has recently appointed state Congress general secretary Sushil Shinde, Buta Singh, and

R.K. Dhawan as observers of the effort to rebuild the state Congress organization. Dr. Mishra is greatly upset at it.

Dr. Mishra and his supporters are also upset at the state party's acting general secretary, Shushil Kumar Shinde. They have said that Mr. Shinde tends to be easily misled by leaders like Ramlakhan Singh Yadav. In this context, they point to the election of the legislative leader. They say that Mr. Shinde had told Dr. Mishra in Patna that the prime minister wants him to be responsible for electing the leader of the legislative group. At this Dr. Mishra had said that he talks to the prime minister directly and would have been told of such a plan directly and not through Shinde. "I had asked him before he left for Patna if he had a preference for some person. He had replied that he would go with the wishes of the legislators." Dr. Mishra further says of this incident, "I have no complaint. I am satisfied. Every person has his own style of operation."

Dr. Mishra further says that he was adamant on having elections after agreeing with Mr. Shinde because his position in the Congress (I) was said to be very weak after the great defeat in the Vaishali Lok Sabha election. He had made the legislative group's election an issue in order to change this image. His candidate Ramasharay Singh received 71 votes, the opposition's Shukuni Chowdhury got six, and the High Command selection got nine votes. A close associate said, "This happened despite Ramlakhan Singh Yadav and some other central ministers are working against Ramasharay Singh. Meanwhile the observers kept telling the legislators to leave it to the High Command. Dr. Mishra avoided saying anything about it."

JANSATTA interviewed the veteran Congress leader Dr. Mishra about the party, Bihar, and other related issues.

[JANSATTA] Why are you opposed to the appointment of observers to reorganize the state Congress party?

[Dr. Mishra] The reorganization of Bihar State Congress Party can prove suicidal. Hidayatullah Khan, in addition to being a veteran, respected, and scholarly minority leader, was also the former vidhan sabha chairman and a minister. He was elected president with three-fourths of the votes. Many effective campaigns against the Janata Dal government were waged during his tenure. Therefore, it is not appropriate to remove him when the Pradesh Congress is working so well and just because some people want him out. In this context, just paying attention to the High Command is against Congress's interest. The people who are demanding Hidayatullah Khan's ouster are the same as those who had opposed him during the organizational election. In a democracy, elected people are not removed from their positions just because the defeated people demand it. Three-fourths of the PCC members, 71 legislators who had voted for Ramasharay Singh, and 48 out of the total of 52 district presidents are with him. Should he be removed just because he is a friend of Jagannath Mishra?

The future of Congress (I) will be affected negatively if he is removed from his office. If this respected and dynamic president belonging to a minority group is replaced with another minority person, the minority groups will not accept it. Removing a respected minority leader and replacing him with a minority leader who did not go to Bhagalpur even for a minute during the Bhagalpur riots and who did not visit even one of the 15 riot-ridden districts in Bihar after the Babri Masjid fiasco will not win the trust of minority members just because he has a Muslim name. The Muslims have been angry at the Congress (I). Removing the only Muslim among the 25 state party presidents will prove suicidal for the Congress (I) Party.

[JANSATTA] You are accusing Tariq Anwar indirectly of these violations and also hinting as if the High Command has decided on making him the president.

[Dr. Mishra] I do not want to mention any person. He was appointed president and later removed by Rajiv Gandhi. If Hidayatullah Khan is removed because some people are demanding that, will the remaining 80 percent let the new president function properly? How can a person who was defeated in the presidential election be made the president by removing the one who had won the election?

[JANSATTA] Have you informed the Congress (I) president of your opposition?

[Dr. Mishra] Definitely.

[JANSATTA] Is not the defeat in the Vaishali election made a basis for removing Hidayatullah Khan?

[Dr. Mishra] One debate was over making Usha Singh the candidate. It was not necessary to ask the state party president about the candidate. Rajiv Gandhi had selected Usha Singh the party candidate after rejecting Satyender Narayan Singh, Laliteshwar Prasad Shahi, and Kishori Singh. Thus, Usha Singh was the proper candidate in the eyes of the High Command. The state Congress tried its best to help her win. However, some unhappy Congress members had stayed out of the election campaign. They did not go to the election district even once. Some senior leaders who were upset told the people at the time of the nomination that she was a very weak candidate and could not compete against the Janata Dal candidate. A former central minister of state continuously tried to weaken Usha Singh with newspaper interviews. Therefore, it was a common belief in this farmer-majority area that Usha Singh could not defeat the Janata Dal. Thus, the farmers there who had always supported the Congress (I) joined the People's Party in order to defeat the Janata Dal candidate. This defeat did not represent Congress's weakness; it resulted from the situations created by the conflict. It is even more inappropriate to reorganize the party on the demand of the persons who had disrupted the election campaign.

[JANSATTA] What should the High Command do?

[Dr. Mishra] There is some room for making minor changes in state [Congress party] officials. It is important to mention here that the number of working committee members was increased from 21 to 49 when I was the president in order to give more representation to the disgruntled group. The number of officials was increased from 10 to 17. Thus, they do not have to do much.

[JANSATTA] The Congress working committee had given the president the right to reorganize the state party. Is not your opposition against both the working committee and the president?

[Dr. Mishra] I am saying this since there is neither any reason [to make changes] nor is the right time in Bihar [to do that]. I am not objecting to their rights.

[JANSATTA] Does it mean that the High Command has been misled by the disgruntled members?

[Dr. Mishra] Reorganization does not always mean change. Nukul Das has been kept the president in Assam for now. I talked with the prime minister on 22 July. He had said this at that time.

[JANSATTA] There are only a few months left before the election in Bihar. What are your expectations from the central leaders?

[Dr. Mishra] The Congress (I) has appointed Narayan Tiwari and Blaram Jakhad to plan for the election. These two leaders should visit the 14 constituencies and then hold a regional working committee meeting. This should be followed by rallies in the 50 districts. The Bihar ministers should be given charge of the districts at the Center. The election tickets should be distributed based on actual situations.

[JANSATTA] You have identified lack of unity in the Congress as the reason for the Vaishali defeat. Will this happen in the vidhan sabha election also?

[Dr. Mishra] This does not work in the general elections?

[JANSATTA] How far is the accusation correct that the leadership does not want the Congress (I) to become strong in northern India?

[Dr. Mishra] This is incorrect. No leadership wants its party to be weak in any region. The Congress (I) was defeated in Uttar Pradesh because of the leaders there.

[JANSATTA] What would the Congress (I) make the basis of its victory in the vidhan sabha election?

[Dr. Mishra] The failure of Lalu Prasad's caste equations; the total failure of the Janata Dal over the last four years; anarchy in the economic, administrative, industrial, and educational areas; the increase in Naxalite activities; and the continuing mass murders. The efforts to destroy Bihar have also alienated the scheduled castes [SC], scheduled tribes [ST], and the minorities. The people are against Lalu Yadav. Their vote will be

divided between the Janata Dal and the Janata Dal (George Fernandes). The backward group votes will also go to the Congress (I) because of the central government's policy of protecting the backward groups. The Congress (I) will become the number one party in these elections. [passage omitted]

Tension Between SP, BSP Said Continuing

Squabbling Ministers

94AS0422A New Delhi JANSATTA in Hindi 3 Aug 94
p 10

[Article by Hemant Sharma: "Squabbles Between SP-BSP Ministers"]

[Text] Lucknow, 2 August—The cabinet ministers in the coalition government are not listening to each other now. This is a new phase in the Samajwadi Party [SP]-Bahujan Samaj Party [BSP] squabble. There has been bitterness among Kanshi Ram, SP, and the BSP since the 10 July rally. The bickering among the ministers is the result of this. This tension has reached an explosive point in some departments such as health, social welfare, and transportation. State Minister of Social Welfare Sunder Singh Baghel is upset at his BSP deputy minister and has sent all his staff home on vacation. Meanwhile, State Health Minister Dinanath Bhaskar, who is angry at his deputy minister, has refused to come to the secretariat until he gets full authority. The squabble between R.K. Chowdhery, the transportation minister, and his deputy, Surenderpal Verma has already surfaced. Chief Minister Mulayam Singh Yadav and SP chief Kanshi Ram are trying to suppress these fights quietly following some strategy.

It is not just that the ministers do not get along with each other; the bitterness felt toward each other has deep roots. The main reason for these squabbles is the decisions on appointments and transfers. This has affected the whole administration. Ministers belonging to both parties are pulling the government in opposite directions. A kind of administrative anarchy has set in. Chief Minister Mulayam Singh Yadav has ordered SP ministers to ignore all this and to care of their work. Kanshi Ram has also advised his ministers to adopt a wait-and-see attitude.

Dinanath Bhaskar, the leading BSP minister of state, has left Lucknow after announcing that he will not return to his office until he is given full authority as a minister. Mr. Bhaskar said in one announcement that Health Minister Balram Yadav treats him worse than a peon. The health minister belongs to the SP. Mr. Bhaskar is not consulted about the transfers in the health ministry and all transfers were made at will. Mr. Bhaskar said that he does not have authority to transfer even peons and clerks of the department under him. He said that according to the policy issued by the chief secretary, ministers and department secretaries have the right to make changes in

transfer orders. However, Mr. Yadav transferred everyone, from lower level employees to doctors, at will.

Bhaskar also met with Kanshi Ram in Delhi last week to discuss this issue. Kanshi Ram advised him to be quiet and not to start a mutiny. The same orders were given to other BSP ministers. The chief minister is also quiet about Bhaskar. Bhaskar has written two letters to the health minister and the chief minister telling them that "I have become a window dresser. I have not been assigned even one duty as the health minister of the state. It is not appropriate for me to go to the office in this situation." The minister of state said, "I had asked the health minister to let me manage at least the administration of third and fourth level employees. The health minister did not even respond to my letters, much less talk with me."

The fight among the SP-BSP ministers and the state ministers has reached a point where it will explode. The Bhaskar fiasco had already surfaced when the SP minister for social welfare, Sunder Singh Baghel, declared war against his cabinet minister Raj Bahadur. No work was assigned to him. Baghel sent his personal staff home telling them that since they had no work, it was necessary for them to just sit there. Mr. Raj Bahadur is a BSP member.

Surinderpal Verma, the SP state minister for transportation, is also in a similar predicament. He cannot get along with his cabinet minister R.K. Chowdhery. The senior members of the ministry do not allow the state transportation minister to do any thing. The disagreement between Beni Prasad Verma and Ramlakhan Verma, two senior associates in the cabinet, is well known. They do not even want to see each other. The reason for their fighting is their common Kurmi origin from the same region. Beni Prasad Verma is the development minister and is a senior SP leader. Ramlakhan Verma is the minister of panchayats and is the leader of the BSP in the Vidhan Sabha. Ramlakhan Verma is so angry at Beni Prasad Verma that he had accused him publicly of trying to break up the BSP.

The situation of the SP leaders is precarious. They are not able to complain to anyone. The chief minister himself is hurt by the BSP. He has advised his ministers to ignore all this and to do their work, because the BSP ministers tend to issue public statements that hurt the government. Dinanath Bhaskar's pain is quite different. He could not get a Harijan Chief Medical Officer [CMO] who was living with him transferred according to his wishes. He is making this an issue saying that scheduled castes were discriminated against in transfer decisions. The list he had given was not approved by Balram Yadav. Bhaskar said that he had told the health minister in a letter that all Dalit chief medical officers and chief medical directors should be allowed to work where they are now. However, the health minister did not follow through.

Health Minister Dinanath Bhaskar alleges that the condition of Dalit officials in this Dalit government is not

good. The number of Dalit CMOs during the former government was 16 and it is 15 now. Five CMOs were first transferred to mountain region as a punishment and four have been demoted. Therefore, says Bhaskar, it is necessary that "I do not go to my office, because I have to answer questions of the people there."

Squabbles Over Muslims

94AS0422B New Delhi JANSATTA in Hindi 29 Jul 94 p 1

[Article by Hemant Sharma: "Now the Muslim Question Comes to the Forefront for SP-BSP"]

[Text] Lucknow, 28 July—The Bahujan Samaj Party [BSP] and Samajwadi Party [SP] have daggers drawn over the Muslims in Uttar Pradesh. The issue this time is the reservation of 10 percent of government jobs for Muslims. The Bahujan Samaj Party has played this card to attract the Muslims and bring them closer to the BSP and put Mulayam Singh Yadav in limbo as he will not be able to accept or reject it because of the restrictions imposed by the constitution. The chief minister rejected the demand for providing 10 percent government jobs to Muslims in the Tuesday cabinet meeting. Ramlakhan Verma, the BSP legislative leader, sent a letter to the prime minister yesterday asking for his support.

Ramlakhan Verma, a close associate of Kanshi Ram and minister of panchayats, had written a letter to Chief Minister Mulayam Singh Yadav about a fortnight back asking him to reserve 10 percent jobs for Muslims. He had written another letter in which he was going to present this topic in the next cabinet meeting. He raised this issue in the last Tuesday meeting. However, the surprising thing was that in the press conference that the chief minister had called to share the decisions right after the cabinet meeting, he said, "this issue was not raised in the meeting." Later, he also said: "You have to remember that it was I who made this demand." It is clear. Both parties are competing to get credit for this.

Chief Minister Mulayam Singh Yadav said later that the six Muslim sub-castes have jobs reserved in the 27 percent quota reserved for backward classes. This way, 80 percent of their population was benefitting from this reservation system. As for the remaining population, he told them that he was also talking about giving 10 percent quota for the high caste poor. The remaining Muslims will benefit from that. The chief minister had also presented this argument in the cabinet meeting that day.

Ramlakhan Verma protested because the chief minister had told the reporters that this issue was not even raised in the meeting. Perhaps, he does not want the BSP to take the credit for it. After this attitude and rejection from the chief minister, Ramlakhan Verma knocked at the prime minister's door. He has advocated reservation quotas for the Muslims in his letter to the prime minister yesterday. He told the prime minister that if there are

some constitutional restrictions in this context, he should take care of those at his level and take needed steps for it.

This BSP strategy is believed to be in response to Mulayam Singh's efforts to increase the distance between the Muslims and the BSP. Mulayam Singh Yadav had Azam Khan, a cabinet associate, issue a statement to counter the BSP campaign. In order to not let the situation get out of hand, Azam Khan has declared this demand for job quota for the Muslims to be legally appropriate. Azam Khan had issued this statement as the head of Minorities Forums of India. Azam Khan went one step further. He said, "The demand to reserve job quotas for Muslims according to their population is an old one. The number of Muslims has been shown to be decreasing according to a planned strategy since 1947." He demanded that this discrepancy be corrected first.

In response to dissenting leader Dr. Massaud's allegations and to counter the BSP campaign to wipe out their anti-Muslim image, Ramlakhan Verma, state minister for panchayats, says that "our slogan has always been that the reservation quotas should be according to population." We are demanding reservation for Muslims under this belief. Their population is 12 percent of the total population and they should get at least 10 percent of the jobs. The BSP legislators and ministers have given separate advice on Ramlakhan Verma's statement. Mulayam Singh Yadav is in a dilemma over it. He does not want to start a new argument or a new commotion over the 50 percent reservation ceiling.

The BSP has made the demand for reservations for the Muslims its top priority. The SP is trying to push the reservation issue toward the high caste people. The BSP had to make this demand because of Massaud Ahmed, their cabinet member who has resigned. Massaud has accused the BSP of being anti-Muslim in his 6-page resignation letter. Massaud has started a state-wide campaign over this issue. Massaud says that Mayavati of the BSP is against Muslims. She had publicly called Muslims traitors. Massaud is trying to limit Mayavati's support base by this effort. The BSP has made this demand just to take the wind out of Massaud's campaign. The remaining political parties, except for V.P. Singh's broken-up Janata Dal, are quiet over this issue. The Janata Dal has asked for a five percent quota for Muslims.

Space Agency Chief Meets Press, Tells Plans

94AS0434A Hyderabad DECCAN CHRONICLE
in English 24 Jul 94 p 10

[Article: "IRS-IC Will Be Launched in September: ISRO Chief"; names and quotation marks as published]

[Text] Hyderabad, July 23: India will launch the IRS-IC [Indian Remote Sensing-IC] satellite, more advanced than the two previous satellites, from Baikanur in Russia in September. Developed by the Indian Space Research

Organisation (ISRO), the IRS-IC will be put into space by the launch vehicle 'Mohniya.'

Addressing a press conference here on Saturday, the ISRO chairman, Dr K. Kasturirangan, said the new satellite was in the advanced stage of completion. It will have three cameras with high resolution with the ability to 'look' sideways and identify the objects. With the wide-field sensor incorporated, a stretch of land upto 700 km can be surveyed. Previously, it was possible to survey only upto a 150 km-stretch.

With the help of the new satellite, it will be possible to do the flood-mapping and give disaster warnings. The IRS-IA and the IRS-IB are already in space for the last six and three years, respectively. With these two satellites, it was possible to survey the earth once in 11 days, Dr Kasturirangan said.

ISRO is in the process of generating an 'action plan' utilising satellite imageries for development of 157 districts in the country. Those selected for this include 14 districts the Telangana and Rayalaseema region as also West Godavari in the State.

Addressing a press conference here on Saturday, Dr K. Kasturirangan said that under the Integrated Management for Sustainable Development (IMSD) project, ISRO was preparing the 'action plan' for the drought and flood-prone districts. It will collect all the data pertaining to the physical conditions of the districts through satellite imageries during the next five years and suggest an action plan which will be implemented in three to five years by the Planning Commission.

ISRO has already prepared an action plan for six districts where they have already been implemented. They are: Anantapur (AP), Ahmednagar (Maharashtra), Tabuo (Orissa), Kalahandi (Orissa) and Bhiwandi (Haryana). The nature of the soil, vegetation, availability of ground and surface water among other things are studied with the help of satellite imageries under the IMSD.

Stating that remote sensing had grown during the last decade, the ISRO chairman said several agencies were making use of the data for various applications. With the help of satellite information, it was possible to predict the yield of crops a month in advance. The Department of Agriculture was making use of this facility. It was also possible to take an inventory of the forest area once in two years. Deforestation, the results of afforestation and other related facts could also be clearly assessed through remote sensing, Dr Kasturirangan said. He further said that 1.6 lakh villages were explored for ground water availability and it was only by using satellite imageries that three lakh wells could be dug. While water-trapping in the conventional way was only 40 percent successful, with the help of satellite imageries it was 90 percent, he said.

Dr Kasturirangan said the availability of minerals in various zones was also detected with remote sensing for

the Geological Survey of India. The chairman said it was the broad philosophy of ISRO to encourage both the private and public sector industry to produce the hardware it needs. While ISRO provides the know-how, the industry manufactures products such as electronic material, chemicals etc on a buy-back arrangement. Over 200 products have been transferred to the industry to be produced for ISRO, he said adding that the industry, too, should discover the spin-offs and manufacture products which would be utilised even otherwise.

He said 40-50 percent of the space budget was going to the industries for buying the components for the vehicles and sub-systems.

The ISRO chairman earlier inaugurated facility set up by Indian Resources Information and Management Technologies Pvt Ltd and Ananth Microtronics (P) Ltd.

Mr Pramod Kale, Director, Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre [VSSC], Thiruvananthapuram, in his address, said while the industry was not interpreting the available data, the day is not far when they themselves will gather the data.

Prof. B.L. Deekshatulu, Director, National Remote Sensing Agency, Hyderabad, said remote sensing was being used in many areas today than what it had been actually designed for. He said the efforts of the private industries should also be to export the remote sensing information. He stressed upon excellence and accountability in this aspect.

In his welcome address, Mr D.V. Raju of Anantha Microtronics said the set-up has so far done 20 projects including the APSEB Terrestrial Radio Communication. He said the facility was the first of its kind in the country.

Mr. R.M. Vavagam, Dy Director-Avionics, VSSC, Mr M.G. Chandrasekar, Director, EOS and Scientific Secretary, ISRO spoke. Mr P. Subba Rao, Managing Director, IN-RIMT presented mementos to the dignitaries.

Concern Expressed Over Underutilization of Air

94AS0437A Bombay *THE TIMES OF INDIA*
in English 20 Jul 94 p 17

[Article: "ADB Expresses Concern Over Under-Utilisation of Aid"]

[Text] New Delhi, July 19.—The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has voiced serious concern over India's pace of aid disbursements under most external assistance programmes which, it said, has been "less than satisfactory with the result that there has been significant aid under-utilisation."

In an unpublished document on India's "Operational programme 1994-97," the Manila-based development bank said that to date a total of \$4,175.4 million had been approved (effective loans available for withdrawal as of December-end 1993). But only \$1,435.9 million

had been disbursed (34.4 percent), while \$2,739.5 million remained available for disbursement.

Consequently, the bank said, the overall disbursement ratio last year (including project and programme loans) stands at a poor 7.5 percent against the bank-wide average of 17.4 percent.

ADB said since the start of the bank's lending operations in India in 1986, it has approved 27 loans in the public sector, of which four have been closed, four are not yet effective and 19 are currently under implementation.

Out of the projects under implementation, 13 are classified as "satisfactory," six as "partially satisfactory" projects than other developing member-countries (DMCs) on a bank-wide basis. Longer delays in project implementation ranging from two to five years are recorded for Indian projects which, it said, contribute to the slower pace of disbursements.

According to ADB, aid disbursement by India last year showed "mixed results." Total disbursements for project loans reached \$215.4 million (no disbursements were made under programme loans). This exceeded the performance for 1992 of \$183.1 million and was slightly higher than the projection for 1993 of \$212 million.

Sector-wise, disbursements in the energy sector (power and hydrocarbons) were lower than projections (\$138.4 million against projections of \$180.4 million), while disbursements in transport and communications exceeded projections by 37 percent \$49.9 million against \$36.3 million projected).

The bank said given the size of Indian Economy, the issue is probably not one of aid absorption capacity per se, but of "Deep-rooted structural impediments in the system of public administration, public sector units and line agencies."

Some agencies mainly government ministries—such as railways, telecommunications and surface transport—have been somewhat "uncertain" about the utility of bank assistance since there is no perception of additionality—bank projects could only be accommodated in an agency's programme if other budgeted items are removed.

Moreover, the ADB document said that the possible payments of taxes and duties on bank-financed imported components also came out of the agency budget, thereby reducing funds for other agency projects.

If urged by the Central government to include such projects, these projects are often given no particular priority for implementation. All of these factors, it said, could work to reduce the agency's interest in expediting bank-financed projects, which result in unnecessary delays.

Recently, the bank said, ... government of India has been requiring particularly the railways to meet more of their financing requirements outside the budget from commercial or other external sources and this might increase interest in seeking bank financing.

Other factors behind slow implementation include delays in obtaining the many required clearances (environment, public investment board) and land acquisition, (particularly for land owned by private parties).

Other key factors for delay include inadequate and untimely local funding and budget release and very often weak project supervisory personnel. "Project supervision often tends to be ineffective and poorly co-ordinated due to the lack of autonomy at the project implementation."

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